THE MELANCHOLY of HARUHI SUZUMIYA

16

ART BY GAKU TSUGANO

STORY BY NAGARU TANIGAWA

CHARACTERS BY: NOIZI ITO

AAA

YEAH. WELL, THEY'VE GOT HER, AFTER ALL.

THE GIRLS IN OUR CLASS ARE CRAZY STRONG.

WAAAAA (CHEEER)

CLASS FIVE'S GONNA WIN, NO QUES-TION.

BAAN (BAM)

AND THAT'S THE GAME!!

16

THE MELANCHOLY of HARUHI SUZUMIYA

ORIGINAL STORY **NAGARU TANIGAWA** MANGA **GAKU TSUGANO** CHARACTER DESIGN: **NOIZI ITO**

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WAAAAA (CHEER)

SHE'S IN THE SOS BRIGADE.

IT'S JUST LIKE HARUHI, ISN'T IT?

I WONDER WHY SHE DOESN'T JOIN ONE OF THE SPORTS CLUBS.

TALENT LIKE HERS ISN'T EXACTLY COMMON.

KYU (SQUEAK)

AS I'M SURE YOU'VE GUESSED, THERE WAS A TOURNAMENT HAPPENING.

KYU

KYU

KYU

I'M NOT IN THE MOOD TO REFUTE HIM.

SHE'S BEEN THE SAME SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL.

THESE DAYS, HER FAVORITE THING TO DO IS GET UP TO INCOMPREHENSIBLE GAMES WITH YOU, KYON.

HARD TO IMAGINE HER DOING ANYTHING LIKE A NORMAL STUDENT.

KYU

KYU

I WAS PRETTY SURE THIS PAST YEAR HAD BEEN FUN FOR HER, AT LEAST.

KYU

AAA

I BET HARUHI'S PLANNING TO BE IN THE SEAT BEHIND MINE THIS YEAR TOO.

KYU

EARLY MARCH.

FINAL EXAMS HAD ENDED, AND WE'D BEGUN PREPA-RATIONS FOR THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

KYU (SQUEAK)

KYU

AA

WAA (CHEER)

AND AT THE SAME TIME, IT'S BEEN FUNDA-MENTAL TO HER.

THE SOS BRIGADE'S BEEN GOOD FOR HER.

I COULD TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT HER.

SHE HADN'T GOTTEN BETTER IN HIGH SCHOOL SO MUCH AS SHE'D RETURNED TO HER NORMAL SELF.

AAA

AAA

IT WAS MIDDLE SCHOOL WHEN SHE'D HAD SUCH TROUBLE.

WHEN THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR STARTED, I WANTED TO HAVE THE SEAT IN FRONT OF HERS.

KYU

KYU

I MIGHT AS WELL COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT.

KYU

IS THAT A PARA-DOX?

ON THE OTHER HAND, I WONDERED IF MAYBE THAT WOULDN'T BE SO BAD.

WAAAAA

IF WE GOT SPLIT UP, IT'D BE PRETTY DISORIENT-ING...

WAAAAA

JUST SO LONG AS HARUHI'S INCREDIBLE POWER STAYED CALM, THAT WAS ENOUGH.

KYU

KYU

ARE YOU STILL DWELLING ON GETTING YOUR BUTT KICKED AT SOCCER?

YOU'RE ACTING WEIRD.

FIRST YOU WERE SMILING, AND NOW YOU'RE ALL SERIOUS.

WHAT'S YOUR PROB-LEM?

I HAD NO IDEA WHAT WAS GOING ON INSIDE THAT MACHINE ANY-MORE.

ZUZU (SIP) ズズ

SHE'D DOWNLOAD AND INSTALL ALL KINDS OF WEIRD STUFF.

HONESTLY, THE BOYS IN CLASS FIVE ARE TOTALLY USELESS.

TURNING ON THE P.C. AND CHECKING AROUND THE NET WAS STANDARD HARUHI ROUTINE.

I'LL BUY SOME NEXT TIME I'M OUT.

NO, SORRY...

DO YOU HAVE ANY ICED TEA?

IF ANYTHING WENT WRONG, I'D JUST CALL THE COMPUTER CLUB PRESIDENT.

NO, IT'S NOT!

THAT WAS JUST GOOD HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGE-MENT.

I WAS THINKING IT WOULD BE NICE TO BRING THINGS BACK AROUND TO THE BEGIN-NING.

INDEED. IT'LL SOON BE A YEAR SINCE WE ALL MET.

NOW THAT REALLY TAKES ME BACK.

...THAT PHRASE HAS A NICE RING TO IT.

I HAVEN'T LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO BE LOOKING BACK ON THE PAST, BUT...

BACK TO THE BEGIN-NING, EH?

AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE IF THINGS COULD HAVE ENDED THAT WAY.

IT FELT PRETTY NICE.

EVERY-ONE WAS RELAXING A BIT AFTER THE TIRING TOURNA-MENT.

IT WAS A LOVELY, PRE-SPRING AFTER-NOON.

GII (CREAK)

BACK TO THE BEGIN-NING.

IS THIS THE SOS BRIGADE?

UM... EXCUSE ME.

NO ONE HAD ARRANGED FOR THIS TO HAPPEN.

THAT'S RIGHT, A CASE.

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT WHEN I HEARD ABOUT THE CASE THE CLIENT BROUGHT.

PAA (BEAM)

GHOSTS!?

THAT THERE ARE... GHOSTS, MAYBE.

YES.

IT'S A RUMOR IN MY NEIGHBOR-HOOD.

YOU'RE ABSO-LUTELY SURE THEY'RE GHOSTS, RIGHT?

I'D LOVE TO HEAR THE DETAILS!

I'D BEEN THINKING SOME-THING WEIRD WAS HAPPEN-ING...

IT'S ONLY RECENTLY THAT THE STORY STARTED. MAYBE THREE DAYS AGO.

I MEAN, IT'S JUST A RUMOR.

IT JUST SEEMS... GHOST-ISH?

I'M NOT POSITIVE.

DURING THE VOLLEYBALL TOURNEY, I THOUGHT SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE SETTER WHO'D SUPPORTED HARUHI VERY WELL.

NOT AT ALL!

UM, MAYBE IT'S TOO MUCH TROUBLE...

SAKA-NAKA... I DON'T [redacted] HER FIRST NAME.

BUT NOBODY HAD RISEN UP TO TAKE HER PLACE.

OR RATHER, WHO'D LEFT THE BIGGEST IMPRESSION IN CLASS FIVE HAD BEEN ASAKURA.

TO BE HONEST, SHE HADN'T MADE MUCH OF AN IMPRESSION ON ME IN CLASS.

I DON'T CARE IF IT'S AN EVIL SPIRIT OR NOT!

WE'LL GO ANY-WHERE!

BUT OUR INTRA-CLASS DISTANCE FROM HER DIDN'T MATTER ONE BIT.

FLYER: SOS BRIGADE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. WE, THE SOS BRIGADE, ARE SEARCHING FOR THE WORLD'S MYSTERIES. PEOPLE WHO'VE EXPERIENCED MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA IN THE PAST, ARE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA, OR PLAN TO EXPERIENCE MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA IN THE FUTURE SHOULD COME TO US FOR A CONSULTATION. WE WILL HELP YOU FIND RESOLUTION.

TH-THAT'S —!

I HAD THIS, SO...

I WAS PRETTY SURE THAT ALL THE MISUND-ERSTANDINGS OVER WHAT KIND OF CLUB WE WERE HAD BEEN CLEARED UP BY NOW.

WHY'RE YOU BRING-ING THIS TO US?

SFX: GOSO (RUMMAGE)

THE FLYER SHE'D WASTED PRECIOUS SCHOOL RESOURCES TO MAKE!

SOS団結団にいたる経緯

THAT... REALLY TAKES ME BACK.

IT'S THE FIRST THING HARUHI DID WHEN SHE STARTED THE SOS BRIGADE!

TO THINK THE SEED HARUHI PLANTED WOULD FINALLY BEAR FRUIT!

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

LIKE IN HORROR MOVIES AND STUFF..

THIS IS THE SOS BRIGADE, RIGHT?

AND YOU DO THIS KIND OF STUFF, RIGHT?

I KNEW THOSE FLYERS WERE A GOOD IDEA!

KAA (ROAR)

PEOPLE ARE PAYING ATTEN-TION!

BA (BUM)

BA

BAN

I TOLD YOU, KYON!

WE DON'T HAVE ANYBODY WHO SPECIAL-IZES IN HORROR ...

SORRY, SAKA-NAKA.

WE'RE GONNA NEED A VIDEO CAMERA FOR INTER-VIEWS.

BUT BEFORE WE DO THAT, WE'LL NEED TO HEAR EVERYTHING ABOUT THEM.

THE LAST THING WE'LL DO IS BANISH THEM.

CHEER UP! WE'LL TAKE YOUR CASE ON FOR FREE.

FOR HER, THE GREATEST REWARD WAS THE FACT OF HAVING A MYSTERY TO SOLVE AT ALL.

I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE THAT IT'S A GHOST...

I WAS CERTAIN THAT NO MATTER WHO CAME TO US WITH A CASE, HARUHI WOULD NEVER ASK FOR MONEY.

TO BE CLEAR, I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS.

DORO (WOOO)

DORO

DORO

OF COURSE, THAT CONVICTION'S BEEN SHAKEN OVER THE PAST YEAR...

GHOSTS, YOU SAY?

"WHAT IS THIS GIRL TALKING ABOUT?"

THAT SEEMED TO BE THE CONSENSUS.

.....

UM ...

DOES THAT MEAN -?

YOUR DOG'S GOT A HECK OF A NAME

THAT'S MY DOG.

DOON (DONG)

ROUS-SEAU?

THE FIRST ONE TO NOTICE ANYTHING STRANGE WAS ROUSSEAU.

KYON, SHUT UP.

DOES THAT REALLY MATTER?

WHEN I FIRST GOT HIM, I USED TO TAKE HIM ON ALL SORTS OF DIFFERENT ROUTES.

BUT NOW I DO THE SAME WALK EVERY TIME...

I TAKE HIM FOR A WALK EVERY MORNING AND EVENING.

WE ALWAYS TAKE THE SAME ROUTE.

...AND HE KEPT BEING LIKE THAT.

SO I CHANGED THE ROUTE I USED.

ABOUT A WEEK AGO, ROUSSEAU STARTED HATING THAT PATH.

HE WOULDN'T WALK IT, EVEN WHEN I PULLED THE LASH.

LIKE I SAID, I DON'T KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY!

IT'S JUST A RUMOR.

SO YOUR DOG WITH THE PHILOS-OPHER'S [redacted] SUDDENLY HATES HIS WALKING ROUTE.

SO WHAT ABOUT THE GHOSTS !?

I DIDN'T FEEL ANY-THING WEIRD.

YES.

UM, SO.

THE HUMANS ARE FINE?

LOTS OF PEOPLE HAVE DOGS IN MY NEIGH-BORHOOD.

SHE HAS TWO SHELTIES.

THE FIRST WAS MRS. ANAN.

SHE NOTICED DURING HER WALK.

GUESS SHE'S NOT REALLY THE ARTICULATE TYPE.

WE'RE GETTING OFF TOPIC...

ANYWAY, NONE OF THE NEIGH-BORHOOD DOGS WILL GO NEAR THAT AREA.

AND I DON'T SEE ANY STRAY CATS THERE EITHER.

...THE HECK?

THAT'S RIGHT.

THERE'S ALSO THIS GIRL NAMED HIGUCHI, WHO HAS A BUNCH OF DOGS.

I SEE, I SEE.

SO IT'S SOMETHING ONLY ANIMALS CAN SEE.

SARA (SKRTCH)

HMM, WELL ...

ONE OF THEM HAS GOTTEN SICK RECENTLY.

I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS, BUT APPARENTLY HE'S BEEN TAKEN TO AN ANIMAL HOSPITAL.

DOES THAT SOUND LIKE A GHOST?

MAYBE MR. WHATEVER'S MUTT SAW A GHOST, GOT SICK, THEN PASSED OUT FROM THE SHOCK.

BUT, THERE'S A DEFINITE POSSIBILITY IT IS.

DON'T CALL IT A MUTT

AT PRESENT, I CAN'T BE SURE.

BA (BAM)

OF COURSE

LIKE A GHOST, GHOUL, OR DEMON!

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING THERE THAT'S SPOOKING THE ANIMALS.

WE SHOULD HEAD TO THE SCENE IMME-DIATELY!

ANYWAY... I'VE GOT THE GIST OF THINGS.

THAT'S ENOUGH.

.....

AND, SPEAKING OF NAGATO.

THE NAMELESS ONE...

...CREEPS EVER CLOSER... SOMETHING SOMETHING...

WHAT IF SOME UNNAMABLE COSMIC HORROR EMERGES TO POSSESS US— WHAT THEN?

SFX: GOGO (RUMBLE) GOGO GOGO GOGO

I WONDERED IF SAKANAKA WAS CONNECTED TO NAGATO LIKE OUR LAST CLIENT, KIMIDORI-SAN, WAS.

WHICH MEANT SOMETHING ABOUT THIS INCIDENT WAS AN ANOMALY.

HER EXPRESSION HAD SHIFTED ONE MICRON TOWARD LOOKING CONTEMPLATIVE.

GOOD POINT!

OH, YEAH, AND WE CAN'T FORGET...

AND A CITY MAP.

WE'LL NEED TO EXAMINE THE SCENE.

MAKE SURE TO BRING THE CAMERA...

BA (WHAP)

OKAY, EVERYBODY, TIME TO GO!

KOI-ZUMI?

SO WHAT IS IT?

I'LL JUST SAY UP FRONT THAT THERE'S NOTHING OBVIOUS THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN I HEAR THE WORD "GHOST."

YES?

I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING FOR CERTAIN AT THE MOMENT.

SENSE OF SMELL.

WHAT IS IT THAT ANIMALS, AND DOGS IN PARTICULAR, ARE VERY GOOD AT?

SO HERE'S A QUIZ FOR YOU.

THE SITUATION IS THAT ALL THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD DOGS HAVE STARTED AVOIDING A CERTAIN LOCATION.

OR WAS BURIED BY SOMEONE.

EXACTLY. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT SOMEWHERE ALONG THEIR ROUTE, SOMETHING THAT GIVES OFF A SCENT THAT DOGS HATE IS BURIED.

ESSEN-TIALLY...
...GIVEN THE VAGUE INFORMATION WE HAVE NOW, WE CAN THINK OF ANY NUMBER OF POSSI-BILITIES.

AN UN-EXPLODED BOMB SEEMS MORE LIKELY.
THAT'S ABSURD.
A CHEMICAL WEAPON, PERHAPS.
OR POSSIBLY A RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL OF SOME KIND.

DO YOUR MYSTERY-SOLVING IN THE MYSTERY CLUB, WILLYA?
KUDO
THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THOSE IS HAVING DEFINITE INFORMA-TION.
KUDO
KUDO
...AND ADDING A LITTLE BIT OF GUT INSTINCT TO DIRECT OUR ACTIONS.
KUDO
THE ONE AND ONLY WAY TO SEE THROUGH TO THE TRUTH WILL BE A COMBINATION OF GATHERING ALL THE EVIDENCE, USING LOGICAL INFERENCE AND LATERAL THINKING...
KUDO
KUDO
KUDO (BLAH)

YOU LOOK GREAT!
BA (WHAP)
WHAAA?

KUDO
REVEALING THE TRUTH VIA PURE DEDUCTION IS THE EPITOME OF THE MYSTERY GENRE...
PREPA-RATIONS COM-PLETE!
KUDO

N. NO, I DON'T!

DO YOU KNOW ANY GOOD EXORCISM CHANTS?

YOU'LL BE ABLE TO BANISH ANY GHOST WITH THIS ON!

DON'T WE HAVE OTHER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT?

LIKE WHETHER OR NOT IT'S OKAY TO COSPLAY ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.

WHADDYA THINK, KYON? PERFECT, RIGHT?

WANT TO DRESS UP TOO, YUKI?

WELL, MAYBE NEXT TIME.

.....

I GOT KINDA INTO IT BACK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.

DON'T WORRY, THERE'S ONE I REMEMBER.

WE'LL FIND SOMETHING WE CAN USE IN A PROPER RITUAL!

ONES WITH SUSPI-CIOUS SHOP-KEEPS.

NEXT TIME WE GO ON PATROL, WE SHOULD GO TO BOOK SHOPS AND PROP STORES!

NOTHING HAPPENED. THOUGH.

OH, RIGHT!

I BOUGHT A MAGIC BOOK AND SAID EVERY-THING JUST LIKE IT TOLD ME TO.

JIRO

JIRO (STARE)

JUST BE GLAD YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WEAR THE MAID OUTFIT.

—LIKE SOMETHING WHERE IF YOU RUB IT A GENIE POPS OUT!

GATAN (CLUNK)

GATAN

GATAN

THERE WEREN'T GOING TO BE ANY GHOSTS SHOWING UP.

OUR CLIENT WAS OBVIOUSLY A SIMPLE DOG-LOVING CLASSMATE.

BUT TO THINK THE REALITY WOULD BE EVEN WEIRDER THAN THAT...

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

HUH.

I GUESS IT WOULD BE RUDE TO SAY I'M A LITTLE SURPRISED.

IT'S REALLY NOT THAT BIG OF A DEAL!

NOT THAT IT MATTERED, BUT HEARING THE WORDS "BIG BROTHER" MADE ME KIND OF NOSTALGIC.

I JUST CAN'T RELAX HERE!

SHE WAS A GENUINE YOUNG LADY OF MEANS.

HER FATHER WAS AN EXECUTIVE AT SOME CONSTRUC-TION OR ARCHITEC-TURE FIRM.

MY BIG BROTHER'S AT A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY FOR MEDICINE.

EVEN PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T LIVE IN THE NEIGH-BORHOOD KNEW IT WAS A FANCY PART OF TOWN.

OOOH!

SUCH LUXURY.

IT'S MAGNI-FICENT!

HERE WE ARE.

OR WOULD THEY BE WICKED DEEDS?

GEEZ, THREE LOCKS?

GACHA (CHAK)

...I WONDERED HOW MANY GOOD DEEDS I WOULD HAVE TO PERFORM TO BE REBORN INTO A PLACE LIKE THIS.

AW, NOT REALLY!

IT DIDN'T HAVE THE SHEER SIZE THAT TSURUYA-SAN'S ESTATE HAS, BUT...

I COULD ONLY CURSE MY OWN LOW BIRTH.

GAAAAN (CLAAANG)

HE... HE'S SO CUTE !!!

ROUSSEAU, SIT!

WAWAN (BARK)

HE'S A WEST HIGHLAND WHITE TERRIER, I BELIEVE.

WHAT KIND OF DOG IS HE?

HE'S LIKE A TOY!

CUTE!!

CUTE!!

THIS IS ROUS-SEAU?

NO INTEREST?

.....

HIS GOOD BREEDING WAS OBVIOUS EVEN TO ME, WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT DOGS.

HE HAD LOVELY FUR.

AH HA HA.

SUZUMIYA-SAN, THAT'S THE SAME NICKNAME MY DAD USES FOR HIM.

YOU'RE SO FLUFFY! AREN'T YOU, JEAN-JACQUES?

BA (SNATCH)

WAH

C'MON, LEMME PLAY WITH THE LITTLE MUTT TOO!

OH, FRIENDS OF YOURS?

SO YOU'RE SAYING J.J. HERE SNIFFED SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS OUT, DID HE?

SORRY, WE CAN'T, WE'VE GOT BUSINESS!

BUT OF COURSE HARUHI WAS UNMOVED AND TURNED HER DOWN.

I WAS STUNNED

WOULD YOU STAY FOR SOME TEA?

WAS THAT SERIOUSLY HER MOTHER?

SHE WAS SO YOUTHFUL AND ATTRAC-TIVE...

...BUT I SUPPOSE IT WAS BETTER WE WENT OUT TO TAKE IN SPRING'S FINEST.

I SORT OF WANTED TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF TEA WOULD'VE BEEN SERVED...

OKAY, J.J., LET'S GO!

TATA (DASH)

CAN'T YOU RUN A LITTLE FASTER?

OH, SUZUMIYA-SAN, THIS WAY!

HEY, KOI-ZUMI.

WHAT'S THAT?

TETE

SUTE (TROT)

TETE

TETE

NOT THAT IT MATTERED, BUT ASAHINA'S BILLOWING ROBES MADE THE SCENE SEEM LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A FANTASY STORY.

I'LL JUST LEAVE THAT TO YOU.

I WAS THINKING OF INVESTIGATING PLACES THAT ARE DIFFICULT FOR DOGS TO APPROACH.

I WAS JUST THINKING THAT!

THIS KIND OF MAKES ME WANT A DOG OF MY OWN.

IT REALLY FELT LIKE WE WERE ON A WALK.

TO GO ON A WALK YOU GOTTA GET OUT AND WALK

WITH THE CHERRY TREES ...

WE WERE BEARING EAST. IF WE KEPT HEADING THIS WAY, WE'D ENCOUNTER THE RIVER.

AH HA!

SEEMS LIKE SHE'S FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT THE GHOST BUSINESS.

KUULUN

KUULUN (WHINE)

?

AH...

THERE'S A LOT OF GREEN. I GUESS SINCE IT'S CLOSE TO THE RIVER.

IT'S A RESI-DENTIAL AREA ...

I DON'T SEE ANYTHING PARTIC-ULARLY SUSPI-CIOUS, THOUGH ...

LOOK, SEE? HERE'S WHERE HE STOPS.

OR THERE'S A CHEMICAL PLANT UPSTREAM OR SOME-THING!

MAYBE IT'S POL-LUTED WITH TOXIC WASTE.

THE RIVER'S PRETTY SUSPI-CIOUS!

BUT A WEEK AGO ROUSSEAU STARTED REFUSING TO GO NEAR THE RIVER.

UP UNTIL LAST WEEK, I'D CONTINUE STRAIGHT ON AHEAD HERE, ALONG THE RIVER.

HIGUCHI-SAN AND MINAMI-SAN SAID THEIR DOGS ARE THE SAME WAY

HE DOESN'T MIND HEADING FARTHER UP OR DOWNSTREAM.

IF YOU WENT UPHILL FROM HERE, YOU'D RUN RIGHT INTO THE ROUTE WE TOOK TO SCHOOL.

THERE WASN'T, OF COURSE.

KUUN クゥ〜ン

KUUN クゥ〜ン

WHEN WE GET TO A POINT YOU DON'T LIKE, YOU JUST BARK, GOT IT?

KUI (TUG) クイ

KUI クイ

OKAY, J.J. YOU'RE GONNA GUIDE US AROUND THIS AREA.

IF THAT HAPPENED TO ME, I'D JUST DIE MYSELF.

THAT'S WHY.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE DOGS WHO DIE FROM THE SHOCK OF THEIR OWNERS BEING ANGRY AT THEM?

...I'VE NEVER BEEN ANGRY WITH ROUS-SEAU.

WE'VE NO INTENTION OF FORCING HIM.

EVEN FOR THE SPOILED DAUGHTER OF A RICH FAMILY...

YES! YES!

I COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW DOG-CRAZY SHE WAS.

IT SHOULD PROBABLY BE CONSIDERED AN AREA RATHER THAN A POINT.

THE PLACE YOU SAY DOGS ARE AVOIDING ...

...BY EXTENSION, IS AHEAD OF US.

WE ARE HERE.

...?

IN ANY CASE, WE SHOULD HEAD BACK FOR NOW.

WE'LL TAKE ROUSSEAU ALONG A DIFFERENT ROUTE.

WE'LL GO SOUTH AGAIN HERE.

THIS SHOULD DO.

SO WE ENDED UP WITH-DRAWING.

OR HAS SHE JUST GOTTEN USED TO IT?

FIGHT!

SHE CARED MORE ABOUT ROUS-SEAU THAN SHE DID ABOUT HER OUTFIT.

WON'T THE DOG GET TIRED?

IT WAS RARE TO SEE KOIZUMI TAKING THE LEAD.

7

KUUUN (WHIIINE)

I THINK I'M STARTING TO UNDER-STAND.

ONE MORE DATA POINT SHOULD DO IT.

HE STOPPED AGAIN?

SO NOW YOU'RE GIVING AN OUTDOOR LECTURE?

INCLUDING OUR POSITION RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE THREE OF THEM.

THE POINTS MARKED IN RED ARE THE POINTS WHERE ROUSSEAU REFUSED TO GO.

HAVE A LOOK AT THIS MAP.

...AND B AND C ARE JUST ABOUT THE SAME.

THE DISTANCES BETWEEN A AND B...

WE'LL CALL THEM POINTS A, B, AND C.

DO YOU NOTICE ANYTHING, LOOKING AT THESE POINTS?

SFX: KYU (SQUEAK)

SO IF I DRAW A CURVE THROUGH THE POINTS...

EVIDENCE IS BETTER THAN THEORY.

THE IMPORTANT CONCEPT TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL POINTS ARE NOT MEANINGFUL BY THEMSELVES.

GOOD EYE.

OH, I SEE.

SO THAT'S HOW IT IS!

KYU

KYU

KYUU

SO THIS CIRCLE IS THE AREA THAT DOGS WON'T ENTER.

67

WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER THE CAUSE IS A SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENON...

...OR SOME KIND OF HARMFUL MAN-MADE SUBSTANCE, BUT...

I AM MERELY HYPOTHESIZING THAT THE AREA IS CIRCULAR.

OUR GOAL SHOULD BE THE CENTER OF THE CIRCLE!

IT'S LIKE SOMETHING IS CALLING US...

IT'S STRANGE.

...OR MAYBE BECAUSE OF THAT.

WE CAN'T STOP EVEN THOUGH HER EXCELLENCY THE BRIGADE CHIEF IS HERE...

Wandering Shadow I : END

I GOT THE FEELING THAT EVERY TIME SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS HAPPENED, I ALWAYS SEEMED TO FIND MYSELF IN FAMILIAR PLACES.

IT FELT LIKE I WAS BEING CALLED THERE.

BAN (BAM)

SO, LET'S HEAD TO THE CENTER!

PI (JAB)

YOU JUST RELAX AND IMAGINE YOU'RE ON A PLEASURE CRUISE.

WE'LL EXORCISE YOUR GHOST!

SHE'S ACTUALLY RUNNING?

DAA (DASH)

NOW, OFF WE GO!

MAYBE AROUND HERE?

THIS SHOULD BE ROUGHLY THE LOCATION.

ONLY THE FIVE FULL MEMBERS OF THE SOS BRIGADE HAD COME THIS FAR.

PAPA (FWISH)

O. OKAY -

OKAY, MIKURU-CHAN! YOU'RE ON!

I JUST CAN'T!

SAKANAKA HAD REFUSED TO BRING ROUSSEAU ALONG

WHICH WASN'T PARTICU-LARLY A PROBLEM.

PA

PA (FWAP)

SHO-SHOUKEN GOUN...

DORO

DORO

DORO

DORO

DORO (CHANT)

DORO

K-KANJIZAIBO... SATSUGYO...? GYOUJIN HANNYAA... HARAMII TAJII...

KAI-KUU ...

YOU'RE LOOK-ING GOOD!

はんにゃしんきょう 般若心経 かんぜい 観自在

SIGN: HANNYA SHINKYOU KANJIZAI

DO-DOICHI SAIKU YAKUSHA-RISHII...

FUII-SHIKI ...?

SHIKIFUII KUUKUU...

NOT WITHIN MY CAPABILITIES TO DETECT.

NOTHING.

IS THAT TRUE?

THERE IS NOTHING.

WAIT JUST A SECOND!

SO WHAT KIND OF FARCE WAS ALL THIS?

JUST A COSPLAY-DISPLAY EVENT?

SIGN: HANNYA SHINKYOU

WHY CAN THAT DOG RUN AROUND HERE LIKE NORMAL?

AH, HMM, THIS MIGHT TAKE A BIT OF TIME TO EXPLAIN ...

HUH?

YO! THERE! I'VE GOT A QUESTION!

THAT DOG...

I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY.

...THIS LITTLE GUY STARTED WANTING TO AVOID OUR USUAL COURSE.

WELL, ABOUT A WEEK AGO...

OH, THAT.

THEN THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY— OR WAS IT THREE DAYS AGO?—

HE STARTED RUNNING ON THIS COURSE.

HA HA HA

HA (PANT)

...I TRIED TO BRING HIM HERE TO SEE IF IT WORKS.

BUT THIS IS THE BEST ROAD TO WALK HIM ON, SO...

SOUNDS LIKE WHAT KOIZUMI WAS THINKING.

THERE WAS PROB-ABLY A BEAR AROUND OR SOME-THING.

AND ITS SCENT WAS LINGER-ING.

I'LL BET IF YOUR FRIEND FORCED HER DOG A LITTLE BIT, HE'D BE BACK TO HIS OLD SELF.

CHIRA (GLANCE)

HNNGH...

LEAVING US FIVE MORONS BEHIND?

HEY, NO PROBLEM.

SEEYA!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YOU REALLY HELPED US OUT!

GAAAN (GRAB)

I'D BEEN REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THEM!

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE GHOSTS?

DON (LOOM)

YOU SEEM WEIRDLY HAPPY.

IT'S KINDA BUGGING ME.

C'MON! THAT'S NOT FAIR.

WHEW...

IT MEANS THERE WEREN'T ANY GHOSTS TO BEGIN WITH.

...AND THE OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD DOGS WON'T APPROACH IS PROBABLY DUE TO THEIR MEMORIES OF WHATEVER IT WAS.

BUT NOW THERE IS NOT.

THE FACT THAT ROUSSEAU ...

ACCORDING TO THE FELLOW WE JUST TALKED TO, IT WAS THREE DAYS AGO THAT HE SOLVED THE PROBLEM.

WE KNOW THAT THERE WAS DEFINITELY SOMETHING HAPPENING UNTIL THAT POINT.

I FELT BETTER SEEING NAGATO REMAINING SILENT.

IF SHE SAID THERE WASN'T ANYTHING HERE, THEN THERE DEFINITELY WASN'T ANYTHING HERE.

MAYBE THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF DOGS?

LIKE ONES WHO REMEMBER UNUSUAL CHANGES AND ONES WHO DON'T....

CHIRA (GLANCE)

YOU COULD OPEN A SHOP WITH THESE!

WHOA! THESE ARE DELI-CIOUS!

SFX: PAAAAA (BEAM)

C'MON, SHOW A LITTLE RESTRAINT.

PLEASE, HAVE AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

PAKU

PAKU

PAKU (CHOMP)

THEY REALLY ARE DELI-CIOUS!

FU FU FU...

YOU'RE THE ONE THINKING THAT!

YOU BETTER NOT BE THINKING OF HIDING ANY IN SOME TUPPER-WARE TO TAKE HOME.

THE LIVING ROOM'S FURNISHINGS WERE CHIC, HIGH-CLASS, AND IN GREAT CONDITION.

SO WE RETURNED TO THE SAKANAKA HOUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY TO REPORT.

I DON'T THINK I'LL MAKE HIM WALK THAT PATH FOR A WHILE.

POOR LITTLE GUY.

BUT SEEING HOW SCARED ROUSSEAU GOT EARLIER...

KLIUN (WHINE)

I UNDERSTAND THAT IT SEEMS SAFE NOW.

ALTHOUGH IT SEEMED TO ME SHE SPOILED HIM A LITTLE TOO MUCH.

ROUSSEAU WAS LUCKY TO HAVE SUCH A CONSIDERATE CARETAKER.

WE'LL LEAVE THAT TO YOUR DISCRETION AS HIS OWNER.

IF I WERE BEING REINCARNATED, BEING THE PET DOG OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL WOULDN'T BE SUCH A BAD LIFE.

YOU'RE SO LUCKY TO HAVE A DOG.

IN THE END, IT SEEMED LIKE WE'D JUST HAD A NORMAL DAY GOING OVER TO OUR CLASSMATE'S HOUSE TO PLAY.

AND NATURALLY, WE KEPT EATING CREAM PUFFS ALL THE WHILE.

AFTER THAT, SAKANAKA CHATTED WITH US ABOUT OTHER DOG-RELATED ANECDOTES.

WHICH WAS JUST FINE WITH ME, PERSONALLY.

BUT A FEW DAYS LATER, SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENED.

...AND EVENTUALLY DISAPPEAR FROM MEMORY.

WHAT I EXPECTED WOULD HAPPEN WAS THAT THE MYSTERY WOULD GO UNSOLVED...

HEY, KYON, DID YOU NOTICE?

SAKANAKA WASN'T AT SCHOOL TODAY!

IT WAS FRIDAY.

THE ONLY THING LEFT TO DO WAS WAIT FOR THE END OF THE TERM TO COME.

WE HAD HER AS A CLIENT...

...SO I WAS GONNA ASK HOW THINGS HAD SHAPED UP TODAY.

SHE'S BEEN GONE SINCE THIS MORN-ING!

WASN'T SHE...?

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY...

...THAT HARUHI'D FINALLY MADE FRIENDS WITH A GIRL IN OUR CLASS.

(IN THIS STUPIDLY-COMPRESSED END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.)

NOW THAT WAS SUR-PRISING.

IT WAS RARE FOR HARUHI TO CARE ABOUT OUR CLASS-MATES ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

URRGH...

AND SHE'S WORRIED SICK, SO...

BUT THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM.

HE'S BEEN TAKEN TO AN ANIMAL HOSPITAL.

BAAN (WHAM)

I KNEW IT!

IT'S BECAUSE OF ROUSSEAU!

HANG ON...

JUST CALM DOWN ...

...BUT SINCE ROUSSEAU ISN'T EATING EITHER, IT JUST MAKES HER FEEL WORSE...

UR...

SHE'S SO WORRIED SHE CAN'T EAT...

I TALKED TO HER ON THE PHONE, AND SHE SOUNDED LIKE SHE WAS ABOUT TO CRY.

...RCH!

I WAS SO WORRIED I FINALLY CALLED HER...

...I KNEW THERE WASN'T ANY TIME TO WASTE ON CLEANING DUTY!

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM!?

J.J.'S SO SICK...

... J.J.'S SO SICK HE CAN'T EVEN DRINK ANY WATER!

THAT MUST BE WHAT'S CAUSING J.J.'S ILLNESS!

I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THAT AREA.

SINCE WHEN HAD HARUHI BEEN GOOD ENOUGH FRIENDS WITH SAKANAKA TO TRADE PHONE NUMBERS?

THAT WAS THE SECOND SURPRISE OF THE DAY.

THEY'RE COMING DOWN WITH THE SAME SICK-NESS.

I JUST HEARD FROM SAKA-NAKA.

WHAT ABOUT OTHER DOGS?

SLOW DOWN, NOW.

HI... HIGUCHI-SAN?

WHEN I ASKED ABOUT IT, IT TURNED OUT IT WAS HIGUCHI-SAN'S DOG!

POOR DOGGIE.

WHEN SHE WENT TO THE ANIMAL HOSPITAL, THE VET SAID THEY'D GOTTEN A SIMILAR CASE IN A FEW DAYS EARLIER.

HERE, HAVE SOME TEA.

TRY TO KEEP THE STORY STRAIGHT, WILLYA?

HIGUCHI-SAN, WHO HAS A BUNCH OF DOGS!

GEEZ, KYON, YOU'RE SO STU-PID!

*FUGM (FWEE)

SAKANAKA TOLD US ABOUT HER BEFORE!!

THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THE CAUSE IS.

UGH, YOU'VE GOT NO MEMORY AT ALL. TRY TO WORK A LITTLE HARDER, HUH?

SO, WHAT'S THE CAUSE?

NOW THAT YOU MEN-TION IT, I RE-MEM-BER THAT ...

THEY'VE JUST LOST THEIR APPETITES AND STOPPED BARKING AND SNIFFING ENTIRELY.

HIGUCHI-SAN'S MIKE IS THE SAME WAY.

THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HIS BODY, HIS HEALTH IS JUST FAILING.

TH-THAT'S RIGHT.

WE SHOULD GO VISIT THEM AT THE HOSPITAL.

.....

(GATAN (CLUNK)

IT SEEMS WE'LL NEED TO RE-INVES-TIGATE THE AREA.

WE CANNOT SHUT OUR EYES TO THIS.

THIS IS, AFTER ALL, A CASE BROUGHT TO US BY A CLIENT.

THE DOG HAD FRIGHTENING CHARISMA, TO HAVE INSPIRED SUCH CONCERN IN ALL OF THEM AFTER ONLY A DAY'S WORTH OF ACTIVITY.

THE ENTIRE BRIGADE SEEMED TO BE UNITED IN ITS WORRY ABOUT ROUSSEAU.

THE FLUFFY LITTLE GUY WAS LIKE A STUFFED ANIMAL. HE DIDN'T SEEM LIKE HE COULD BE VERY TOUGH.

I'LL ADMIT IT, I WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE UNKNOWN CAUSE OF THIS AFFLICTION.

.....

COMING ...

WE'VE COME TO SEE HOW HE'S DOING!

HEY!

EXCUSE US!

IT WAS HARD TO WATCH.

I COULD SEE HOW DE-PRESSED SHE WAS JUST LOOKING AT HER.

COME ON IN, SUZU-MIYA-SAN...

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING, EVERY-BODY.

GAAAAN (SHOCK)

ガーン

ROU.S. SEAU. SAN.

HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN LIKE THIS?

KUUN (WHINE)

クゥーン…

KUUN

クゥー!

HIGUCHI-SAN'S MIKE IS THE SAME WAY.

HE WAS ROUS-SEAU'S FRIEND, BUT...

HE COULDN'T DO HIS MORNING WALK EITHER.

HE WON'T MOVE FROM THIS SPOT, AND HE WON'T EAT.

WHAT IS MIKE'S CONDITION NOW?

BASED ON YOUR STORY, THEN HIGUCHI'S MIKE SHOULD HAVE BEEN AFFECTED FIVE DAYS AGO.

MAY I ASK SOME-THING?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO IF THEY HAVE TO DO THAT TO ROUS-SEAU ...

...AND THAT HE WAS PUT ON AN I.V. TO GET SOME NU-TRIENTS INTO HIS BODY.

THEY SAY HE WON'T EAT...

MIKE'S BEEN BAD FOR DAYS AND STILL IS.

IS IT JUST MIKE AND ROUSSEAU WHO'VE BEEN AFFECTED?

ONE MORE QUES-TION.

I WAS START-ING TO GET GEN-UINELY WORRIED.

IF THINGS KEPT UP THIS WAY, HE'D JUST KEEP GETTING WEAKER.

I HAVEN'T HEARD IF ANYONE ELSE IS LIKE THIS.

WHEN MIKE GOT SICK, THERE WERE A LOT OF RUMORS ABOUT IT...

...SO IF OTHER DOGS ARE SICK, I'M SURE I WOULD HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT.

AND THIS MIKE...

...IS HIS OWNER'S HOUSE NEARBY?

YES.

IT'S ACROSS THE STREET, THREE HOUSES DOWN.

I WONDER IF IT REALLY IS A GHOST ...

I MEAN, IF THE VET AT THE ANIMAL HOSPITAL COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT...

MAYBE ...

IT'S SURE NO LAUGHING MATTER ...

HEY, YUKI, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING?

SU (SHF)

JI (STARE)

...?

UUU (WHOOO)

NOT YOU, AND NOT ME.

THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO BY REMAIN-ING HERE.

WE SHOULD RETREAT FOR THE MOMENT.

I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T..

HMM...

YOU DON'T KNOW EITHER, YUKI?

IF NOTHING ELSE, THERE'S SUZU-MIYA-SAN'S STATE TO CON-SIDER.

POOR DOGGIE.

THERE'S NO HURRY.

BUT WE MUSTN'T WASTE ANY TIME.

KUUN

KUUN (WHINE)

I EXPECT THE ANIMAL HOSPITAL IS WORKING ON A TREATMENT.

ALL WE CAN DO IS WATCH AND WAIT.

FORTU-NATELY, I KNOW SOME VETERI-NARIANS...

IF NOT FOR MARUMI'S SAKE, THEN FOR SAKANAKA AND POUS-SEAU'S.

SO IT WAS TIME TO GET THINGS DONE.

AND THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO THAT IS...

WE NEED TO DEAL WITH THIS BEFORE SHE TAKES SOME KIND OF DISASTROUS ACTION.

WHAT IS IT THAT ROUSSEAU'S GOT?

WHAT WAS THAT BACK THERE?

NAGATO.

?

A SILICON-BASED SYMBIOTIC DATA LIFE FORM ELEMENT.

A DATA LIFE FORM ELE-MENT.

IT IS NOT VISIBLE TO HUMAN EYES.

IT HAS NO PHYSICAL FORM.

IT IS COMPRISED OF PURE DATA.

THOSE ARE ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEVEL.

THIS IS FAR MORE PRIMITIVE.

LIKE THE NETWORK INFECTION THAT SPREAD TO THE COMPUTER CLUB PRESIDENT?

SO...IS IT SIMILAR TO THE DATA OVERMIND IN THAT REGARD?

I SEE. SO THAT'S HOW.

TO DRAW AN ANALOGY TO A TERRESTRIAL LIFE-FORM...

...IT IS A VIRUS.

...BECAUSE THE DATA LIFE FORM ELEMENTS ARE REPRODUCING AND SPREADING, LIKE A VIRUS.

...NO, ITS MIND—WAS INFECTED BEFORE THE INFECTION WAS PASSED ON TO ROUSSEAU...

SO THE FIRST DOG'S BODY...

...IT IS POSSIBLE ...

THIS IS A RATHER SILLY QUESTION, BUT...

...WHAT ARE THESE STRANGE DATA LIFE-FORMS DOING ON EARTH?

THOSE SILICATE BODIES WERE VAPORIZED BY THE HEAT FROM [illegible] FRICTION...

...TO SURMISE THAT THE SILICATE BODIES THAT ACTED AS A SUBSTRATE WERE DRAWN INTO EARTH'S GRAVITY WELL.

BUT DATA LIFE FORMS CAN CONTINUE TO EXIST WHEN THE PHYSICAL MATTER THAT HOUSES THEM IS DESTROYED.

THE REMAINING DATA ELEMENTS THEN [illegible] SURFACE.

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THERE ARE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE NETWORKS OF SILICON-BASED LIFE-FORMS AND CANINE NEURAL CIRCUITRY.

AND THEY HAPPENED TO INFECT A DOG THAT PASSED BY.

RIGHT WHERE THE DOGS WERE BEING WALKED.

FOR THE SILICON LIFE-FORM TO RECON-STRUCT ITS COMPLETE NETWORK ...

HOW MANY WILL IT NEED?

A UNIFIED DATA ELEMENT IS PLANNING TO EXPAND ITS COGNITIVE MEMORY.

IT IS NOT AN INFEC-TION.

I CAN BARELY FOLLOW THIS...

WHICH MEANS THE RESULT IS THAT THE DOGS BEGIN TO WEAKEN.

BUT THEY'RE NOT THE SAME.

BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE IT WILL STOP HAVING SPREAD TO TWO DOGS.

SO A SINGLE DOG DOESN'T CONTAIN SUFFICIENT RESOURCES.

NOW WAIT JUST A SECOND.

...INFECTING EVERY DOG ON THE PLANET WOULD BE INSUFFICIENT.

UM... ORGANIC LIFE-FORMS?

SO... THEN, WHAT? HUMANS LIKE US, WE'RE...

IT DEPENDS ON HOW "LIFE" IS DEFINED.

.....

YOU'RE SAYING NONORGANIC LIFE-FORMS EXIST TOO?

NO WAY...

YOU SAY IT LIKE IT'S NO BIG DEAL...

IF YOU ARE REFERRING TO ENTITIES WHOSE CONSCIOUSNESSES ARE CONTAINED WITHIN SILICATE CONSTRUCTIONS, SUCH ENTITIES EXIST.

BUT SHE'S SAYING THAT ELSEWHERE IN THE UNIVERSE, THERE ARE INORGANIC ENTITIES THAT HAVE GAINED CONSCIOUSNESS ON THEIR OWN.

IT'S A LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY WE HUMANS HAVE NOT YET ACHIEVED.

THEY'RE PROBABLY A MACHINE LIFE-FORM.

OR PERHAPS IN ALL OF SPACE, SUCH ENTITIES ARE THE NORM, AND WE HUMANS ARE THE EXCEPTION.

ORGANIC LIFE-FORMS POSSESS ABSOLUTE LIMITS ON THEIR DATA ACCUMULATION AND TRANSMISSION CAPABILITIES.

IT WAS THOUGHT THAT SUCH ENTITIES COULD NEVER DEVELOP INTELLIGENCE.

...IS DETERMINED BY AN ENTITY'S ABILITY TO COLLECT DATA, THEN INDEPENDENTLY PROCESS THAT STORED DATA.

INTELLIGENCE...

DO THEY HAVE SOULS?

YOU'RE PRETTY TALKATIVE TODAY, NAGATO.

THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO TELL ME.

WHAT ABOUT HUMANS?

...THAT SURE SOUNDS LIKE A GHOST TO ME.

A CONSCIOUSNESS THAT LIVES ON WHEN ITS CONTAINER IS DESTROYED...

ARE YOU SAYING EVEN IF OUR BODY IS DESTROYED, THE SPIRIT REMAINS?

WE HAVE BRAINS THAT THINK, WHICH MEANS THERE'S A CONSCIOUSNESS IN THERE SOMEWHERE

THE DATA LIFE FORM ELEMENT ATTACHES SYMBIOTICALLY TO THE SILICON LIFE-FORMS, AUGMENTING THEIR COGNITIVE ABILITIES.

EACH ENTITY BENEFITS THE OTHER.

IN ORDER TO HARVEST AND PROCESS MORE DATA, IT REQUIRED PHYSICAL NETWORK CIRCUITRY.

ORIGINALLY, THE [illegible] WERE NOTHING MORE THAN AN [illegible] CLUMP OF [illegible]

THUS THEY HAVE NO WILL TO LIVE OR SELF-PRESERVATION CONCEPTS.

THEY DO NOTHING OTHER THAN COGITATE.

THEIR ACTIVITIES AS LIFE-FORMS ARE LIMITED TO COGNITION.

.....

...DID NAGATO JUST CRACK THE FIRST JOKE OF HER LIFE?

WHAT THE—

THAT... IS CLAS-SIFIED.

THIS MYSTERIOUS EXPRESSION ON HER FACE... I'LL MAKE SURE TO REMEMBER THIS.

HA HA...

AND THE SECOND AFTER SHE SAID IT...

...I COULD'VE SWORN SHE SMILED FAINTLY AT HER OWN JOKE.

I DON'T REALLY GET IT, BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE A PAIN.

HOWEVER, WE WILL NEED A BIOLOGICAL NETWORK TO CONTAIN THE ARCHIVED DATA.

...AND COMPRESS THEM INTO AN ARCHIVE, HALTING THEIR ACTIVITY.

WE MUST GAIN CONTROL OF THE RELEVANT DATA LIFE FORM ELEMENTS ...

DELE-TION IS NOT POS-SIBLE. PER-MISSION HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED.

CAN'T WE JUST WIPE IT OUT?

WHAT, FROM YOUR BOSS?

PERMIS-SION?

THIS DATA LIFE FORM IS A BENEFICIAL BEING.

SO SHE FINALLY FELT COMFORTABLE MAKING A JOKE.

IF THAT BROUGHT HER ANY HAPPINESS AT ALL...THEN AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF HUMANITY, I CAN'T HELP BUT BE A LITTLE INTERESTED.

BENE-FICIAL ...?

THAT'S SURPRIS-ING.

SO IT'S SOMETHING LIKE LACTO-BACCILLUS BACTERIA IS TO US, THEN?

WANDERING SHADOW II : END

PER-MISSION HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED.

DELETION IS NOT POSSIBLE.

HOWEVER, WE WILL NEED A BIOLOGICAL NETWORK TO CONTAIN THE ARCHIVED DATA.

...AND COMPRESS THEM INTO AN ARCHIVE, HALTING THEIR ACTIVITY.

WE MUST GAIN CONTROL OF THE RELEVANT DATA LIFE FORM ELEMENTS ...

...BUT APPARENTLY WE HAD TO HELP IT OUT.

IT WAS HARD TO IMAGINE THAT ANYTHING THAT HAD GIVEN US THIS MUCH TROUBLE COULD BE BENEFICIAL ...

Wandering Shadow III

YOU'LL HAVE TO COME UP WITH SOME REASON OR ANOTHER.

TRUE.

WE'LL VISIT SAKANAKA AGAIN TOMORROW.

THERE'S NO SCHOOL.

PERHAPS NOT IMMEDIATELY, BUT...

...WE WILL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.

THERE IS SOMETHING WE NEED.

SORRY, NAGATO. WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU.

TOMORROW, THEN.

THE CAT AT YOUR HOUSE WOULD BE IDEAL.

A CAT.

IT TURNS THAT NAGATO ONCE READ A BOOK THAT HAD A DOG WITH A SIMILAR SICKNESS.

SO ABOUT ROUSSEAU.

HARUHI?

YEAH, IT'S ME.

Yeah, the treat-ment was in there too.

NO WAY!

OF COURSE IT IS!

I can't say for sure it'll go well, but... it's worth trying, right?

SO WE'LL MEET UP AGAIN TOMOR-ROW AT SAKA-NAKA'S ...

...I MEAN, NAGATO, IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT'S GOING TO SUDDENLY GET WORSE...

ACCORD-ING TO KOIZU...

NO, WE DON'T HAVE TO GO RIGHT NOW.

EH?

OKAY, SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW. 9 A.M.

YEAH, HIM TOO.

TELL THEM TO BRING HIM TO SAKA-NAKA'S PLACE.

MIKE OR WHAT-EVER?

OH, ALSO ... THERE WAS ANOTHER DOG, RIGHT?

BEAU-TIFULLY DONE.

THAT SHOULD DO IT, RIGHT?

INDEED. UNTIL TOMOR-ROW...

YEAH, I'M GETTING THAT FEELING.

DON'T LOOK SO PESSI-MISTIC.

I'M SURE EVERY-THING WILL GO WELL.

HARUHI AND ASAHINA-SAN BOTH WORE SERIOUS EXPRES-SIONS.

THEY DIDN'T LOOK LIKE THEIR USUAL SELVES.

THE NEXT DAY...

WHILE WE WERE WAITING, WE HEARD THE SITUATION FROM KOIZUMI.

YOU'RE LATE.

BUT I GUESS YOU HAVE GOOD TIMING.

IS THAT SOME NEW KIND OF FAIRY FROM POLY-NESIA OR SOME-THING?

SUN-CAT?

FOR SOME-THING CALLED "SUN-CAT"!

YUKI'S GOING TO TRY SOME KIND OF FOLK REMEDY?

Ohooo

IT'S A VERY RARE AFFLICTION.

A SORT OF NEUROSIS, REALLY.

IT'S WHEN AN OTHERWISE ACTIVE DOG SUDDENLY LOSES ALL OF ITS ENERGY.

LISTEN TO THIS GUY..

IT'S THE ILLNESS WE BELIEVE ROUSSEAU HAS CONTRACTED.

カックン

KAKKUN (NOD)

RIGHT?

OR SO NAGATO HAS EXPLAINED TO ME.

SO, YOU BROUGHT HIM ALONG, THEN?

YUP.

CAGE

SO THAT'S THE SETUP THEY WENT WITH, HUH?

YUKI, ARE YOU SURE THIS IS OKAY?

CAN WE TRUST THIS BOOK?

CAGE

IT'S SO WEIRD TO NEED A CAT TO TREAT A DISEASE.

IT TOOK A BIT OF EFFORT GETTING IT READY IN A SINGLE NIGHT, BUT...

...THE REST IS UP TO NAGATO-SAN.

I'VE PREPARED SUITABLE TOOLS.

DON'T WORRY.

WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT IS CLEANING UP AFTERWARD.

SHE'LL SAVE ROUSSEAU FOR SURE.

I DON'T HAVE ANY DOUBTS ABOUT NAGATO'S ABILITIES.

THIS IS JUST MY INTUITION, BUT I DON'T THINK THIS WILL BE TOO TROUBLE-SOME.

THAT'LL BE MY JOB.

ARRR

RRRR

GATAN

I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.

HER HIGHEST PRIORITY RIGHT NOW IS TO CURE ROUSSEAU.

GATAN (CLUNK)

YOU'LL SEE IF YOU WATCH SUZU-MIYA-SAN.

THERE WERE ONLY TWO MORE STOPS BEFORE SAKANAKA'S NEIGHBOR-HOOD.

THERE WASN'T MUCH TIME LEFT TO THINK.

GATAN

3954

YOU MIGHT NOT THINK IT, BUT YUKI'S SUPER-DEPEND-ABLE!

LEAVE IT TO US, SAKANAKA-SAN!

SUZUMIYA-SAN...

AND THAT MUST BE MIKE...

HIGUCHI-SAN LOOKS LIKE SHE GOES TO A WOMEN'S COLLEGE SOME-WHERE.

I NEVER WOULD'VE GUESSED WE'D COME OVER THREE TIMES IN ONE WEEK.

THIS IS OUR THIRD VISIT HERE.

KOIZUMI-KUN! YUKI!

ばっ BA (WHAP)

OKAY, LET'S GET READY!

HE DEFINITELY LOOKS EXHAUSTED ...

SHU (SHFF)

KACHA (CLICK)

VERY WELL, THEN.

THAT'S SETTING THE MOOD, ALL RIGHT!

HOO...

NOW, IF YOU'LL BRING SHAMISEN OUT...

ER, YES...

CAN I ASK YOU TO PUT YOUR DOG NEXT TO ROUSSEAU?

NOW, THEN ...

SHI (SHF)

SHI

FU (PHEW)

IT IS FINISHED.

AH!

WHAT DID YOU DO JUST NOW?

YOU MEAN... THAT'S IT?

AH...

KUUN

クゥン

KUUN (WHINE)

クゥン?

KYUU (WHIMPER)

キュ

AMAZING!

THAT'S OUR YUKI!

ROUS-SEAU!

MIKE!

WA (CHEER)

AND WITH-OUT ANY SILICON-WHATEVER NONSENSE.

YOU BETTER EXPLAIN THIS, KOIZUMI.

HEE HEE...

THIS HURTS TO LISTEN TO...IT HURTS...

DOGS ARE EVEN MORE SENSITIVE TO THE AROMATIC CANDLE THAN HUMANS ARE.

...WAS A GROUND-BREAKING FORM OF ANIMAL THERAPY BETWEEN ANIMALS, USING THE CAT.

WHAT NAGATO-SAN PERFORMED ...

YOU KNEW STUFF EVEN THE VET-ERINARIAN DIDN'T KNOW!

THAT'S REALLY AMAZING, NAGATO-SAN!

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT LOGICALLY, SHE'S A LITTLE TOO AMAZING.

SHE'S EVEN NATION-AL-LEVEL AT SPORTS!

SHE'S READ A MILLION BOOKS, PLAYS THE GUITAR...

THAT'S OUR YUKI. SHE'S THE SOS BRIGADE'S [redacted] ONE ALL-ROUNDER.

CAN'T HELP BUT THINK HE'S LAYING IT ON PRETTY THICK...

IT SEEMS ONE CAN'T DISMISS FOLK REMEDIES OUT OF HAND.

THERE ARE TREATMENTS IN CHINESE MEDICINE WHOSE EFFECTIVENESS CAN'T BE EXPLAINED.

FREEZE THE DATA LIFE FORM ELEMENT.

NAGATO HAD DONE ONLY ONE THING.

WHEN ROUSSEAU OR MIKE REACHED THE END OF HIS NATURAL LIFE, THE FROZEN DATA LIFE FORM WOULD REMAIN.

BUT THAT COULD'VE CAUSED PROBLEMS LATER.

SHE COULD HAVE FROZEN IT WITHIN THE TWO DOGS.

ANY ORGANIC LIFE FORM WOULD SUFFICE AS A HOST.

EVEN ME OR HARUHI.

SO WE DECIDED IT WOULD BE BETTER TO PLACE IT IN A FORM WE COULD CONTIN-UOUSLY MONITOR.

THIS MALE CALICO WHO OCCASIONALLY GAINED THE ABILITY TO SPEAK HUMAN LANGUAGE...

BUT NAGATO IDENTIFIED SHAMISEN AS THE ONE LEAST LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE PROBLEMS.

WHILE SAKANAKA HAD CERTAINLY SUFFERED MISFORTUNE, THE SOURCE OF THAT MISFORTUNE HAD NOW BEEN TRANS-FERRED INTO MY CAT.

GEEZ.

SO THAT WAS THE PLAN.

I DIDN'T THINK STORING A FROZEN COSMIC LIFE FORM OR TWO INSIDE HIM WAS GOING TO CAUSE HIM ANY DIFFICULTY.

AND ANYWAY, I'D GOTTEN FOND OF HIM.

SHAMI! SHAMI!

I COULD HAND HIM OVER TO NAGATO ...BUT NO.

IT WOULD TAKE A LOT OF EFFORT TO CONVINCE MY SISTER.

HE MIGHT EVEN START TALKING AGAIN SOMEDAY.

SHAMISEN WAS THE HERO HERE.

IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE!

SUZUMIYA-SAN, EVERYBODY, THANK YOU SO MUCH.

I DON'T KNOW HOW I CAN EVER REPAY YOU...

THE FEELING WE GET SEEING THEM HEALTHY IS MORE THAN ENOUGH COMPEN-SATION.

MY SOS BRIGADE ISN'T A FOR-PROFIT ESTAB-LISHMENT, ANYWAY.

WE DON'T NEED MONEY OR GOODS.

ON THE WAY BACK, HARUHI CHATTED WITH ASAHINA ABOUT DOGS.

SHE SEEMED TO HAVE FOR-GOTTEN ABOUT A CERTAIN SOME-THING ENTIRE-LY.

AND IT WOULD MAKE THINGS EASIER FOR ME IF SHE STAYED THAT WAY.

IT WOULD BE VERY GOOD IF HARUHI AND SAKANAKA WERE IN THE SAME CLASS NEXT YEAR.

LAST YEAR AS WELL, WITH KIMIDORI-SAN.

NAGATO-SAN REALLY SAVED US.

THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM WAS EXTREMELY... PROBLEMATIC, AFTER ALL.

GOOD WORK TODAY.

THOUGH THAT'S MERELY MY OPINION.

NAGATO-SAN'S MEMBER-SHIP IN THE SOS BRIGADE HAS BECOME A TOTAL NECES-SITY.

.....

WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

NOT REALLY.

HUH.

YOU SEEM TO BE THE ONE WITH SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY.

...WHAT'S THE REASON THEY KEEP COMING TO EARTH?

TO PUT IT BLUNTLY ...

...THE CAVE CRICKET AND THE THING WE JUST DEALT WITH...

BUT THAT WAS AN ACTIVE, DELIBERATE RESPONSE.

HARUHI CREATED THAT DATA EXPLOSION.

WHICH CAUSED THE DATA OVERMIND TO SEND NAGATO HERE.

IS THAT THE ANSWER?

HARU-HI.

AND ASAHINA CAME FROM THE FUTURE, ALONG WITH THOSE OTHERS...

JUST HOW FAR DOES HARUHI'S SUBCONSCIOUS REACH?

IT'S AN ASTRO-NOMICALLY TINY PROBA-BILITY.

THIS COSMIC LIFE-FORM FALLING HERE, IN OUR TOWN...

DO YOU THINK IT'S A COINCI-DENCE?

ARE YOU SAYING NAGATO SET IT ALL UP?

SO WHAT IF IT WASN'T A COIN-CIDENCE!

IT'S ASTRO-NOMICAL, ALL RIGHT!

ALSO ...

...IT'S CLEAR THIS DIDN'T HAPPEN BECAUSE SUZUMIYA-SAN WISHED FOR IT.

...OR SOME OTHER ALIEN OF WHICH WE ARE YET UNAWARE.

SURELY NOT.

IF IT WERE SCRIPTED, IT WOULD BE THE DATA OVERMIND ...

THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE THAT FINDS A STABLE SUZUMIYA-SAN TO BE LESS INTERESTING.

I TOLD YOU BEFORE, DIDN'T I?

SUZUMIYA-SAN'S PSYCHE IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE STABLE.

AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

THIS INCIDENT MAY BE ONLY AN OMEN OF SOMETHING ELSE.

SO...

THERE'S SOMETHING THAT WANTS TO PROVOKE SUZUMIYA-SAN'S POWER INTO ACTION.

...OR SOME-THING ELSE.

...A TIME-QUAKE...

BE IT A DATA-FLARE...

TCH...

...THEY ARE NOT LIMITED TO HUMANOID INTERFACES TO THE DATA OVERMIND.

YOU MUST KNOW.

THESE ALIENS ...

THE TIMING OF THESE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL VISITS CANNOT BE EXPLAINED BY COINCIDENCE.

IF YOU WANT TO CALL NAGATO A "HUMANOID INTERFACE," FINE!

I'M NOT GOING ALONG WITH THIS PESSIMISM OF YOURS!

KOI-ZUMI.

THEY KEEP ME AWARE OF MANY THINGS.

THE AGENCY HAS A VARIETY OF INFOR-MATION SOURCES.

BUT ARE YOU SAYING YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT OTHER ALIENS?

WELL, WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT NAGATO.

THERE'S NO ENTITY ANYWHERE WITH MORE WILL-POWER THAN HER.

I HAVE A FEELING THEY'LL BE TRYING SOMETHING AGAIN SOON.

BUT I'LL LEAVE THOSE TO NAGATO-SAN.

MY ROLE IS TO WORK AGAINST THE AGENCY'S RIVAL ORGANIZA-TION.

I'LL SAY IT AS MANY TIMES AS I HAVE TO.

I WON'T LET YOU FORGET THE PROMISE YOU MADE ON THAT SNOWY MOUN-TAIN.

AND IF IT COMES DOWN TO IT, YOU'LL BE RUNNING AROUND WITH ME TOO.

WHEN THE TIME COMES.

I RE-MEMBER IT, OF COURSE.

AND EVEN IF I DID FORGET, I'M QUITE CERTAIN YOU'D REMIND ME, WOULDN'T YOU?

WHAT IF MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO...

A DATA LIFE FORM APPEARED THAT CARED NOT FOR SEX, BUT HUMANITY

DO GHOSTS EXIST?

THAT'S CLASSIFIED.

HA!

IT PROBABLY JUMPED TO CONCLUSIONS AGAIN

THERE'S EVIDENCE RUDIMENTARY CONSCIOUSNESS ON EARTH ALREADY

THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT WOULD ENGAGE IN SYMBIOSIS WITH ONE WEAK ZERO.

I'M HOME.

NON-CORPOREAL ENTITIES THAT HAD GOTTEN STUCK IN PHYSICAL BODIES SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE...

STILL, ORGANIC BEINGS WITH INTEL-LECT.

WOULD THAT BE WHAT HAD NAGATO'S BOSS SO INTER-ESTED?

...WHAT IF THEY HAD BEEN PASSED DOWN THROUGH TO THE PRESENT...

JUST AS MITO-CHONDRIA HAD ONCE BEEN INDE-PENDENT ORGANISMS ...

WELCOME HOME!

WHERE'D YOU TAKE SHAMI?

CREAM PUFFS?

HERE, BROUGHT YOU A PRESENT.

SURE, WHAT-EVER.

I SHOULD LEAVE THIS KIND OF SPECU-LATION TO KOIZUMI.

AS I RECALL, IT WAS JUST THE STORY OF A ROMANCE BETWEEN A BOY AND GIRL AS THEY GO FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE.

I HAD A BOOK THAT NAGATO HAD LOANED ME ABOUT A WEEK EARLIER.

SHE SHOULD BE A LIBRARIAN.

NAGATO SHOULDN'T GO INTO FORTUNE-TELLING OR VETERINARY WORK...

IN MANY WAYS, IT SUITS ME JUST FINE.

KARI (SCRITCH)

KARI カリ

KARI カリ

カリ

NYAA (MEOW)

...HUH?

TA (DASH)

NO WAY.

...ARE THEY LOOKING AT SOMETHING THAT WE CAN'T SEE...?

WHEN CATS STARE INTO SPACE...

...THE CONSCIOUSNESS IN MY HEAD DOESN'T BELONG TO ANYONE ELSE.

JUST LIKE I CAN'T BE ANYONE OTHER THAN WHO I AM...

RRR

AND IF SOMEBODY WANTED IT BACK, WELL, TOUGH.

IT'S ALL MINE. ONLY MINE.

Why do you think J.J. and Mike caught that weird sickness in the first place?

I've been thinking about it...

MENU

HEY, KYON. I FORGOT SOME-THING IMPOR-TANT.

WHAT'S UP?

I BET IT WAS THERE ON THAT PATH WE WALKED UNTIL ABOUT A WEEK AGO.

MY GUESS IS THAT IT STILL HASN'T CUT ITS TIES WITH THE MORTAL WORLD.

IT'S PROBABLY TURNED INTO A WANDERING SPIRIT...

WHAT I THINK IS THAT THE TWO OF THEM REALLY DID SEE A GHOST, AND THE SHOCK MADE THEM SICK!

SO YOU'RE GONNA TRACK IT DOWN AT ITS SOURCE, HUH?

I SEE, O WISE BRIGADE CHIEF.

THIS TIME WE'RE DEFINITELY GONNA GET A PICTURE WITH THAT GHOST!

SO WE'RE HAVING AN ALL-HANDS MEETING TOMORROW!

...I DIDN'T REALLY MIND IF A GHOST ACTUALLY SHOWED UP.

WELL, FOR MY PART...

NOT NOW, ANYWAY.

BUT I WASN'T JEALOUS OF IT.

THE REALITY PORTRAYED IN THAT BOOK WAS FAR MORE ORDINARY THAN THE ONE THAT SURROUNDED ME.

Wandering Shadow III : END

THE DISSOCIATION OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA I

GUESS IT'S SPRING...

SHAMISEN HAD STOPPED CRAWLING INTO BED WITH ME...

...WHICH TELLS ME THAT THE REGION'S MOST LEGITIMATELY PRAISE-WORTHY MONTHS HAVE ARRIVED.

OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS, IT WAS THE ACTIVITY OF MY CAT SHAMISEN ...

...THAT MADE THE CHANGING SEASONS MOST EVIDENT TO ME.

IT IS WITHOUT A DOUBT SPRING.

AND A NEW SCHOOL YEAR HAS BEGUN.

BOTH A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR... AND A NEW YEAR FOR MY HEART AS WELL.

THIS IS OUR SECOND SPRING AS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

THOUGH I AM UNSURE AS TO WHETHER I SHOULD SAY THAT IT HAS "FINALLY" ARRIVED...

...OR "ALREADY" ARRIVED.

WAI (MERRY)

WAI

WAI

BUT FOR HUMANS, WHO CAN ONLY EXPERIENCE TIME SUBJECTIVELY, THEY ARE BUT A GUIDELINE.

A CLOCK'S HANDS TEACH US ABOUT OBJECTIVITY.

GAYA (CHATTER)

GAYA

GAYA

THE FORCE OF HABIT IS POW-ERFUL INDEED.

OF COURSE, HUMANS ARE ADAPT-ABLE CREA-TURES.

THEY CAN ADAPT TO MOST ENVIRON-MENTS.

UUUUUU (WHOOOO)

WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT IS WHAT ONE THOUGHT AND DID...

...WITHIN A GIVEN SPAN OF TIME.

I'VE BEEN SLOW IN EX-PLAIN-ING THE CUR-RENT CIRCUM-STAN-CES.

..SO HERE'S A QUICK SUM-MARY.

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR US TO ADAPT TO SUDDEN, UNFORE-SEEN CHANGES.

BUT THERE MIGHT BE A DRAW-BACK TO THAT.

THIS WAS EXACTLY WHAT WAS HAPPENING HERE AND NOW IN THE COURTYARD.

SCHOOL CLUBS—ESPECIALLY THE SMALLER, WEIRDER ONES—MUST RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS AND EXPLAIN THEIR ACTIVITIES.

WAI

WAI

WAI (CHATTER)

SIGN: LITERATURE CLUB

I'M A THIRD-YEAR!

...BUT ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE SOS BRIGADE HAD MOST AUSPICIOUSLY MADE IT TO THEIR NEXT YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL.

WHOOPS, I SUPPOSE IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING...

IN OTHER WORDS, WE WERE SOMEHOW SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS ...

BUT...

AND THAT WAS FINE, SO FAR AS IT WENT.

...I'D WOUND UP IN THE SAME CLASS AS HARUHI AGAIN.

BY SOME COSMIC MIS-TAKE...

NOT ONLY WERE TANIGUCHI AND KUNIKIDA STILL IN MY CLASS, IT WAS EVEN THE SAME HOME-ROOM TEACHER.

FOR ONCE, I AGREED WITH HER.

WHAT'S THIS? THERE'S PRACTICALLY NO CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR!

FINE, WHATEVER.

HMM.

I DO KNOW OF ONE GIRL WHO COULD MAKE COINCI-DENCE INTO INEVITA-BILITY.

AT THE VERY LEAST, THE AGENCY HAS TAKEN A HANDS-OFF APPROACH.

NO.

IT IS A COINCI-DENCE.

IT'S PRETTY MUCH THE SAME AS BEFORE.

ARE YOU GUYS BEHIND THIS?

THAT DAY, HARUHI'S SELF-INTRODUCTION HAD STUNNED ALL OF CLASS FIVE.

OF THE BEINGS SHE MENTIONED IN HER SPEECH, ONE HAS YET TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE...

SLIDERS?

WAI (CHATTER)

WAI

WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT IS SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.

WAI

WHO LURKS AMONG THOSE NEW FRESHMEN?

SIGN- LITERATURE CLUB

WAI

WHAT DOES SHE MEAN BY THAT?

HEY, YOU THERE.

WAI

"IF YOU SEE ANYBODY WITH POTENTIAL, SECURE THEM IMMEDIATELY"

WA

WA

I HAVE NO DESIRE FOR ONE TO SHOW UP.

BUT SHE MIGHT VERY WELL BE FEELING THEIR ABSENCE.

WAI

IT HASN'T BEEN LONG ENOUGH.

YOUR SPEECH DURING THE OPENING ASSEMBLY WAS TOO LONG, PAL

YOUR LEADER DOES NOT SEEM TO BE HERE.

IT HAS BEEN A WHILE.

ZAZA (MARCH)

I SUSPECTED THAT YOU MIGHT BE PLANNING SOMETHING QUITE BEYOND MY IMAGINATION.

GAYA (CLAMOR)

GAYA

GAYA

GAYA

GAYA

GO ON AHEAD TO THE PLAYING FIELD.

KIMIDORI-KUN.

SU (SHF)

BUT I AM FINISHED HERE.

UNDERSTOOD

INCIDENTALLY...

...I BELIEVE OUR TREASURER WANTED TO SPEAK WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE LITERATURE CLUB.

DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY NEED FOR THAT BUT

HE WAS HIDING HIS TRUE NATURE FROM KUNIKIDA-SAN

SO THIS WAS THE SOURCE OF THE PRESIDENT'S COURTEOUS MANNER

I'D MANAGED TO STOP HARUHI FROM CRASHING IT.

WHICH COULD'VE TURNED INTO A DISASTER.

HE WAS TALKING ABOUT THE CLUB BUDGET MEETING THAT HAD HAPPENED BEFORE SPRING BREAK.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT METHOD SHE USED

APPARENTLY, SHE'D JUST SAT THERE QUIETLY STARING AT THE TREASURER.

WITH AN EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD BUDGET

IT'S A CLOSED MATTER.

I'LL HAVE NO COMPLAINTS SO LONG AS YOU USE IT FOR CLUB ACTIVITIES.

THANK GOD FOR THAT

GAYA

GAYA

BUT I WON'T ARGUE WITH IT NOW.

THE LITERATURE CLUB WAS THE ONLY IRREGULARITY.

AS THEY MOSTLY WENT ALONG WITH THE BUDGET KIMIDORI AND I PROPOSED.

OF COURSE, IT WAS A MEETING IN NAME ONLY.

GAYA

GAYA

GAYA

GOOD WORK.

WELL THEN, MR. PRESIDENT ...

IF THAT WILL BE ALL...

INCIDENTALLY ...

...THERE HAD BEEN NOT A SINGLE MOMENT OF EYE CONTACT BETWEEN NAGATO AND KIMIDORI.

PERHAPS THEY WERE COMMUNICATING WITHOUT WORDS.

UNTIL A MOMENT EARLIER, IT HAD FELT LIKE SHE WASN'T THERE AT ALL.

THAT WAS HOW SUDDEN HER APPEARANCE SEEMED.

I ASSUMED THAT STUDENT COUNCIL WORK WOULD BE NOTHING BUT A PAIN, BUT...

...IT'S ACTU-ALLY PRETTY FUN.

WELL, YOU SURE LOOK THE PART.

IT'S LIKE YOU'VE [redacted] DOING THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT THING FOR THREE YEARS.

ガヤ GAYA

ガヤ GAYA (CLAMOR)

IT'S FINE TO BE ASSUMING A PERSONA, BUT...

...DON'T LET THE MASK YOU'RE WEARING CONSUME YOU.

HOW MANY TOMB RAIDERS HAVE BECOME MUMMIES THEM-SELVES?

WHEN I'M PLAYING THE PRESI-DENT N FRONT OF THE FACULTY OR ADMINI-STRA-TION

...SOME-TIMES I FORGET WHICH IS THE REAL ME.

SOME-TIMES BEING SOMEBODY ELSE AIN'T HALF BAD.

DON'T WORRY, KOIZUMI. I'VE GOT IT COVERED.

HE TURNS INTO A CORPSE.

AN ARCHAEO-LOGIST RAIDING A TOMB DOESN'T TURN INTO A MUMMY.

HEY, HEY! YOU THERE!

...KEEPING A LEASH ON THAT INSANE GIRL OF YOURS IS YOUR JOB.

GIROR! (GLARE)

JUST REMEM-BER...

BOX: ORANGES

WE'RE NOT DOING A SINGLE THING THAT THE STUDENT COUNCIL CAN COMPLAIN ABOUT!

WELL, TOO BAD FOR YOU!

温州みかん

BAN (BAM)

I LEAVE FOR ONE SECOND, AND GUESS WHO SHOWS UP?

YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL!

SHE SAID IT AGAIN!

ドスン
SOSUN (THUMP)

YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL I WAS CONSIDERATE ENOUGH TO WEAR A CHEONGSAM INSTEAD!

I ORIGINALLY WANTED TO WEAR THE BUNNY GIRL OUTFIT.

HMPH!

IT'S NOT LIKE I'M GOING TO WEAR IT TO AND FROM SCHOOL.

I'D HOPED THAT THE STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT WOULD LEARN TO RESPECT STUDENT INDEPENDENCE.

SHANARI (SWISH)

DOES SHE WANT TO WEAR THE CHEONGSAM?

EH?...

HOU (HAAH)

OH, UM, YES.

WEARING IT TO AND FROM SCHOOL IS...

RIGHT, MIKURU-CHAN?

文芸部
コチラ

IT'S A SIGN.

I SEE.

SO WHAT'S THAT SIGN FOR?

WAI (CHATTER)

I HOPE YOU UNDER-STAND THAT MUCH!

WAI ?

WE ARE HERE TO TO HELP YUKI.

WAI ?

WAI ?

SIGN: LITERATURE CLUB HERE

THAT MUCH WAS TRUE.

AT LAST WEEK'S CLUB INTRO-DUCTIONS ...

YUKI'D NEVER ACTIVELY SHOW OFF HER APPEAL.

WAI ?

WAI ?

NOT SURE I CAN TRUST YOU.

SIGN: NORTH HIGH CULTURE CLUB INTRODUCTIONS

YUKI NAGATO WAS A FORCE TO BE RECK-ONED WITH.

IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY STUDENTS WHO WERE INTERESTED IN JOINING THE LITERATURE CLUB, THAT HAD ERASED THEIR INTEREST.

北高部活動紹介

...SHE'D PRESENTED A TALK ENTITLED "A NEUROLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON INDIVIDUALS...

AND THE INSUFFICIENCY OF VERBAL DISCOURSE BETWEEN."

STAY THERE AND BEHAVE YOUR-SELVES.

SO LONG AS YOU DON'T CAUSE ANY COMMO-TION, I SUPPOSE IT IS FINE.

VERY WELL.

(INCIDENTALLY:)

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THE SOS BRIGADE HAD BEEN GIVEN NO TIME TO MAKE A PRESENTA-TION.

HMPH. THAT IS ALL, THEN.

ZA (STEP)

BLEH!

THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!

...WILL YOU TURN THE CLUB-ROOM OVER TO THEM?

LASTLY ...

...IF YOU SUCCEED IN RECRUITING NEW LITERATURE CLUB MEMBERS ...

YAWOO

BIRI (RIP)

SOS団

EASY-PEASY!

WELL, THAT WENT WELL!

OBVIOUSLY SHE'S NOT GONNA JUST STAND THERE QUIETLY.

DAN (THUNK)

I KNEW IT..

SIGN: SOS BRIGADE

C'MON, SET IT UP!

GREAT, HERE WE GO AGAIN...

SEE?

TA (DASH)

GOTO (CLUNK)

GO

OH, SURE!

SORRY, BUT...

...COULD WE BORROW YOUR POWER?

GET THE MONITOR WORKING.

SURE.

GOSOSO (SHUFFLE)

HEY, ACTU-ALLY...

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT MY REPLACE-MENT, THOUGH.

I SAID I'D DO IT FOR ONE MORE SEMES-TER.

HEY, YOU'RE THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMPUTER CLUB.

NO MATTER THE BUG, SHE CAN FIX IT, EASY AS FLIPPING A SWITCH.

SHE'S IN-CRED-IBLE!

I'D LIKE TO GET NAGATO TO GET CON-CURRENT MEM-BERSHIP IN BOTH OUR CLUBS.

PERA

IT'S PERFECTLY COMPATIBLE WITH EVERY PIECE OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE ...

NOBODY BUT HER CAN EVEN BEGIN TO UNDER-STAND OR USE THE SOURCE CODE EITHER.

IN PRAC-TICALLY NO TIME, SHE WROTE A NEW O.S. FOR IT!

HER CUSTOM P.C. IS AMAZING TOO!

PERA (BLAH)

JUST FOR A SEMESTER, I GUESS

GAYA

HE'S STILL THE PRESIDENT?

GAYA

GAYA

GAYA, (CHATTER)

ALL I COULD SAY WAS THAT WAS OUR NAGATO.

HURRY, KYON. GET THE VIDEO PLAYIN'!

CHIRA (GLANCE)

HE DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.

WHAT HIS PROBLEM?

...SO IF ANYBODY COMES OVER THINKING THAT, CHASE 'EM AWAY!

KYU (GRIP)

WE'RE NOT THE FILM CLUB...

MIKURU-CHAN AND I WILL FIGURE THIS OUT.

IF YOU SEE ANYBODY THAT LOOKS INTER-ESTING, WRITE THEIR NAME AND CLASS DOWN.

YOU GUYS JUST WAIT HERE.

THE SOS BRIGADE WAS SUMMONED TO ACTION NEARLY EVERY DAY OF THE BREAK, DISPATCHED BY HARUHI LIKE SO MANY TOMAHAWK MISSILES.

I IMAGINED SHE'D STARTED THINKING ABOUT DOING ANOTHER MOVIE AROUND THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT WITH THE DOG.

AND OF COURSE HARUHI WASN'T GOING TO QUIETLY WAIT AROUND.

BEFORE THE NEW TERM STARTED, THERE HAD OF COURSE BEEN A SPRING BREAK...

WHICH I ADMIT WAS FUN.

WE WERE INVITED OVER TO THE TSURUYA ESTATE'S GRAND GARDENS TO ENJOY A FLOWER-VIEWING PARTY.

WE WENT ALL OVER.

ANTIQUE SHOPS, FLEA MARKETS ...

... THEN OVER TO SAKANAKA'S PLACE TO CHECK UP ON LITTLE ROUSSEAU.

THE SEQUEL FOR HER SCHOOL FESTIVAL FILM, "THE ADVENTURES OF MIKURU ASAHINA EPISODE 00."

The Revenge of Yuki Nagato
Episode 00

AMID ALL THAT, THIS IS WHAT SHE WAS MOST DEVOTED TO.

IT'S BECAUSE THEY JUST TAKE OUT ALL THE GOOD SCENES AND STRING 'EM TOGETHER!

RIGHT?

WHEN YOU SEE 'EM, YOU'RE LIKE "WHOA, THAT LOOKS AWE-SOME."

GISHI (CREAK)

HAVE YOU EVER FELT TRICKED BY A TRAILER?

WE JUST NEED A BUNCH OF HIGH-LIGHTS!

SINCE WE WON'T NEED A CLIMAX OR ANY-THING.

THERE'S NO LIMIT TO HOW GOOD WE COULD MAKE IT!

WHICH IS WHY!

WE'LL MAKE THE TRAILER FIRST, THEN WORK OUT THE REST OF THE MOVIE LATER!

DIRECTOR: HARUHI

PROD
SCENE 41 TAKE 2
DIRECTOR
CAMERA
DATE 10/10

SIMPLY TO ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS.

THAT WAS THE PLAN, SO THAT'S WHY WE WOUND UP MAKING A TRAILER FOR A FILM THAT DIDN'T ACTUALLY EXIST.

A PARADE OF SCENES RIPPED OFF FROM ALL OVER.

AND ITS CONTENTS ARE AMAZING.

DUM-DEE-DUM!

DUM-DEE-DUM!

THE SCENE WITH TSURUYA-SAN WAS THERE JUST BECAUSE WE'D SHOT FOOTAGE AT THE FLOWER-VIEWING PARTY.

MIKURU AND SHAMISEN SWITCH PERSON-ALITIES.

YUKI DECLARES WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR CONTEXT, "I AM YOUR MOTHER."

DON (DLiM)

ドーン

DON

DOOON

ドーン

AT LEAST THE SCENES OF A WAITRESS-OUTFITTED ASAHINA-SAN JUMPING AROUND SUCCEEDED.

BUT ONLY AS AN ASAHINA-SAN MUSIC VIDEO.

YUKI WENT FLYING OFF INTO SPACE AT THE END OF THE LAST MOVIE, SO HOW IS SHE BACK ON EARTH?

WHICH MEANT SHE HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT IT AT ALL.

AND NEW ENEMIES TOO!

BAAN (WHOOSH)

I'LL THINK ABOUT THAT NEXT!

GAYA (CHATTER)

?

GAYA

THE CAT.

HOW IS HE?

GAYA

YEAH.

IT CERTAINLY WAS A BUSY SPRING BREAK.

I SEE.

HE'S DOING GREAT.

OH, SHAMI-SEN?

OH, THAT?

AND THE ABILITIES MY POWERS GIVE ME?

I AM NOT SPEAKING IN CONVEN-TIONAL TERMS.

YOU DO REMEMBER MY TRUE NATURE AND RESPON-SIBILITY, DON'T YOU?

CLOSED SPACE AND CELES-TIALS.

STARTING THE LAST DAY OF SPRING BREAK AND THROUGH TODAY...

I HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP.

RECENTLY, THE RATE OF INCIDENTS HAS BEEN RISING.

THANKS TO THAT, I'VE BEEN ON A 24-HOUR ROTATION.

DIDN'T YOU SEE HARUHI JUST NOW?

SHE WAS TOTALLY HAPPY!

WAIT JUST A SEC-OND!

HEY, C'MON ...

SUZUMIYA-SAN'S MENTAL STATE WAS SO STABLE RIGHT AFTER SHE STARTED THE SOS BRIGADE LAST YEAR, BUT NOW ...

WAI

WAI CCHATTERO

SURELY IT MUST.

DOESN'T ANYTHING STICK OUT TO YOU?

I'D LIKE YOU TO THINK BACK ...

...TO THE EVENTS OF THE LAST DAY OF SPRING BREAK.

WAI

WAI

WAI (CHATTER)

SO WHAT HAP-PENED?

THAT WAS THE DAY SUZUMIYA-SAN BEGAN TO SHIFT AT A SUBCONSCIOUS LEVEL.

BE-FORE WE GOT ON THE TRAIN.

YOU'RE REALLY ANNOY-ING.

HARUHI SAID SHE WANTED TO GET IN ON IT, SO...

...WE TOOK A TRAIN OVER.

THAT'S THE DAY WE WENT TO THE FLEA MARKET, RIGHT?

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO DEAL WITH THE CLUTTER.

DON'T YOU THINK THERE'S TOO MUCH STUFF IN THIS ROOM?

PAPER: FLEA MARKET, EVERYONE WELCOME

WE CAN'T DO IT THIS TIME, BUT WE SHOULD DEFINITELY PARTICIPATE NEXT TIME!

IF WE TAKE AN EXPRESS TRAIN, WE CAN GET THERE IN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

SO I FOUND THIS!

WE'RE GOING TO CHECK OUT THE FLEA MARKET!

SO EVERYBODY MAKE SURE TO KEEP THE LAST DAY OF SPRING BREAK OPEN!

...SO THAT'S HOW WE MADE THE PLANS TO GO, ROUGHLY.

ISN'T THAT JUST GOING TO MEAN WE HAVE MORE STUFF?

WITH CLUB FUNDS!

AND IF WE SEE ANYTHING INTERESTING, WE'RE GONNA BUY IT!

I WAS STARTING TO WONDER IF IT HAD BEEN ERASED FROM YOUR MEMORY.

GAYA

GAYA

SO YOU'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO ARRIVE AT THAT POINT.

GAYA (CHATTER)

I CAN'T GUESS AT THE POSSIBLE PROFIT OR LOSS...

...BUT IF I COULD, I'D ERASE IT.

HEH!

...THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE AT ALL.

...

GAYA

WHAT A WEIRD THING TO SAY.

WHAT GOOD WOULD IT DO ANYONE IF I'D LOST THAT MEMORY?

GAYA

NOT THAT IT MATTERS, BUT TOMOR-ROW SHE'LL BE A SIXTH GRADER AND ELEVEN YEARS OLD.

...MY LITTLE SISTER'S BEEN INVITED OVER TO MIYOKICHI'S FOR THE DAY.

THEN, THE DAY OF THE FLEA MARKET ...

ONE MORE TANGENT ...

... THREE DAYS EARLIER, I'D HAPPENED TO BUMP INTO MIYOKICHI ON THE STREET.

SHE'D GOTTEN EVEN MORE BEAUTI-FUL.

NEXT TO MY SISTER, I COULDN'T HELP BUT SEE THEM AS THE "BIG SISTER" AND "LITTLE SISTER" IN A MATCHED SET OF DOLLS.

NO NEED TO BRAG ABOUT YOUR GIRL-FRIEND.

THIS SEEMS A BIT IRRELE-VANT.

COULD YOU TELL ME MORE DETAIL ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE?

GAYA

FINE.

GAYA

I'LL HURRY THE STORY ALONG.

GAYA (CHATTER)

YOU'RE BEING A LITTLE HARSH.

YOU'VE NEVER SEEN MIYOKICHI, SO IT'S EASY FOR YOU TO BE INDIFFERENT.

GAYA

BUT AFTER THAT, YOU SHOW UP.

SO YOU SHOULD KNOW WHAT HAPPENED YOURSELF.

THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO HEAR.

WHAT HAPPENED THEN?

AS USUAL, I GOT ON MY BIKE AND RODE OVER TO THE TRAIN STATION.

I THINK I SEARCHED FOR AN EMPTY SPOT IN THE BIKE RACKS NEXT TO THE TRAIN STATION.

THAT'S RIGHT, AND THEN...

CHA (CHAK)

KO (CLACK)

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT.

HEYA, KYON!

YOU GOT INTO NORTH HIGH, RIGHT?

HOW IS IT?

ARE YOU HAVING A PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE?

"OH, IT'S YOU"? WHAT KIND OF GREETING IS THAT?

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT, KYON.

I HAVEN'T?

WELL, NEITHER HAVE YOU.

OH, IT'S YOU, SASAKI.

CHA (CHAK)

IF SO, THEN I HAVEN'T MATURED A BIT.

IF MY PHYSICAL MEASURE-MENTS ARE TO BE BELIEVED, THERE SHOULD BE AT LEAST SOME CHANGE IN MY BODY.

HEH HEH!

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE.

BUT WHAT YOU CAN'T CHANGE IS WHAT'S INSIDE.

THAT'S RIGHT. IT FELT SOME-HOW NOS-TALGIC.

SASAKI WAS ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT OBSCURE STUFF LIKE THIS.

THE DISSOCIATION OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA 18 END

"I AM HARUHI SUZUMIYA, CHIEF OF THE SOS BRIGADE! THAT IS ALL."

SHE SEEMED TO THINK THAT WAS ENOUGH.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS IN 2-5.

HARUHI SUZUMIYA DID NOT REPEAT THE WORDS SHE'D UTTERED A YEAR BEFORE.

SINCE THERE WAS NOBODY THERE WHO DIDN'T KNOW THE NAME HARUHI SUZUMIYA.

DOOON (DUUUM)

AND I SUPPOSE IT WAS.

The Dissociation of Haruhi Suzumiya II

KUH!
KUH!

"OH, IT'S YOU"? WHAT KIND OF GREETING IS THAT?

AFTER ALL THIS TIME.

OH, IT'S YOU, SASAKI.

YOU GOT INTO NORTH HIGH, RIGHT?

HOW IS IT?

ARE YOU HAVING A PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL EXPERI-ENCE?

IN FACT, THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU WAS...

...WHEN WE GOT OUR DIPLOMAS TOGETHER.

WHICH IS WHY I'VE GOTTA GO TO CRAM SCHOOL.

THAT'S RIGHT.

YOU WENT TO SOME FANCY PRIVATE SCHOOL OUTSIDE THE CITY, RIGHT?

THE ONE THAT GETS PEOPLE INTO FAMOUS COLLEGES.

I COULD ALMOST SAY IT'S FUN.

YEAH.

AT LEAST AT THE MOMENT IT ISN'T ESPECIALLY UNPLEASANT.

KUH KUH...

I SHOULD'VE GONE TO A PUBLIC SCHOOL.

IT'S SERIOUSLY LIKE I'M STUDYING JUST TO STUDY MORE.

THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT'LL HAPPEN TO ME IF I'M LATE.

ONE OF 'EM'S REALLY PICKY ABOUT PUNCTUALITY

SORRY, SASAKI...

I'VE GOTTA MEET UP WITH MY COHORTS.

ANY FRIEND OF YOURS IS A FRIEND OF MINE.

I'D VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE THEIR FACES.

COHORTS? FROM SCHOOL?

HUH, HOW 'BOUT THAT.

ZA

I'D THINK I'VE GOTTEN A LITTLE TALLER.

OH YEAH?

KYON, YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL.

ZA (STEP)

第三步逆轉

WHAT YOU CAN'T CHANGE IS WHAT'S INSIDE.

ZA

YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR APPEAR-ANCE IF YOU WANT TO.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

APOL-OGIES.

...THEN WITHOUT CHANGING THE MEDIUM, THERE WON'T BE MUCH CHANGE IN PATTERNS OF THINKING OR PERCEPTION.

TA

IF HUMAN CONSCIOUS-NESS IS MATERIAL IN NATURE...

NOT FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE.

TA

TA.

...BACK IN JUNIOR HIGH, SASAKI WAS ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT OBSCURE STUFF LIKE THIS.

I REMEMBER, NOW...

TA

THIS IS STRANGELY NOSTALGIC.

TA

CHANGES IN THE WORLD EQUAL CHANGES IN IDEOLOGY.

YOU COULD SAY THAT'S ALL THERE IS.

TA

...AS LONG AS THERE'S NO ST. PAUL-LIKE CHANGE IN DIRECTION OR COPERNICAN REVOLUTION.

AT LEAST...

WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND ANY PHENOMENA WHOSE COGNITIVE ABILITY EXCEEDS OUR OWN.

BECAUSE WE'RE HUMANS.

BUT WE KNOW INFRARED RADIATION AND DOG WHISTLES EXIST, RIGHT?

WE SIMPLY CAN'T PERCEIVE THEM.

TA

TA

TA

TA

HA-HA. I'M HONORED

IN ANY CASE, SASAKI AND I CONTINUED ON TOWARD THE CLUB'S USUAL MEETING SPOT.

BUT I WAS TIRED OF HEARING THE WORD "COINCI-DENCE."

I DON'T KNOW ANY-THING ABOUT ACTS OF GOD.

HA HA...

I WISH YOU'D COME TO NORTH HIGH, SASAKI.

I KNOW A GUY WHO SOUNDS JUST LIKE YOU.

KYON, YOU'VE GOTTA TREASURE EVERY SINGLE SECOND ...

?

WHO'S THAT?

YOU'VE GOT SOME GUTS BEING LATE.

HUH?

...CLOSE FRIEND.

OH, THIS IS MY...

...THAT COUNTS AS A CLOSE FRIEND.

BUT I THINK IF YOU CAN HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE WITHOUT MANY PLEASANTRIES AT ALL...

FROM OUR LAST YEAR OF JUNIOR HIGH, I SHOULD SAY.

WE HUNG OUT A LOT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL, SO...

UH, YEAH ...

I GUESS SO.

AS FAR AS I'M CON-CERNED ...

... THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE, KYON.

I WAS GETTING A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

NUU (NNG)

.....

SFX: JII (STARE)

SFX: CHIRARI (GLANCE)

BECAUSE I LIVE IN THE SAME CITY SHE DOES.

AND YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY PERSON FROM OUR JUNIOR HIGH WHO WENT ON TO NORTH HIGH, KYON.

HEY, I DIDN'T

HOW DO YOU KNOW HARUHI?

SASAKI.

I'M SASA-KI.

AND YOU MUST BE SUZUMIYA-SAN.

I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU.

HE COULD'VE GONE TO A TOUGHER HIGH SCHOOL...

...BUT THAT WEIRDO WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO GET INTO A SO-SO PUBLIC SCHOOL.

ANYWAY ...

OH, RIGHT, KUNI-KIDA.

YES, HIM TOO.

HOW'S HE DOING?

TAKING IT EASY, I'LL BET.

...I HEAR YOU'VE TAKEN GOOD CARE OF KYON AT NORTH HIGH.

SO, NICE TO MEET YOU.

LIKEWISE.

GYU (SQUEEZE)

SU (SHF)

I GUESS I DON'T HAVE TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.

AFTER INTRODUCING HERSELF, SASAKI HEADED OFF.

AND THEN, WE WENT TO THE CAFÉ, WHERE I PICKED UP THE BILL...

AFTER THAT, YOU KNOW THE REST.

AFTER THAT, WE WENT TO THE FLEA MARKET...

...WHERE HARUHI BOUGHT A PILE OF CRAP WE DON'T NEED.

WOOOW!

SUCH A PRIMITIVE TOY!

BUT IT'S SO PRETTY..

THE ONLY GOOD PART WAS... HMM.

ASAHINA-SAN GETTING EXCITED ABOUT A KALEIDO-SCOPE, MAYBE.

IS YOUR MEMORY OF THINGS ANY DIFFERENT?

...YOUR INTER-PRETATION AND MINE HAVE SOME SERIOUS INCONSIS-TENCIES.

GAYA

HOW-EVER ...

(GAYA (CHATTER)

AS FAR AS THE OBJECTIVE EVENTS GO, YOUR EXPLANA-TION IS QUITE CORRECT.

WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT IS?

EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN TRENDING DOWNWARD LAST YEAR AND INTO THIS ONE.

EARLIER I TOLD YOU THAT INCIDENTS OF CLOSED SPACE WERE ON THE RISE.

HERE, THEN, IS THE QUES-TION.

I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY REALIZED WHAT THAT WAS.

GAYA

GAYA

THERE WAS ONLY A SINGLE IRREGULAR ELEMENT.

BUT NOTHING ESPECIALLY MOMENTOUS HAPPENED.

WHATEVER THE PROBLEM IS, IT BEGAN ON THE FINAL DAY OF SPRING BREAK.

ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME SAY IT?

WHY WOULD THAT AFFECT HARUHI'S STRESS LEVELS?

GAYA

BUT WHY?

SASAKI, HUH?

IT'S BECAUSE ...

FINE, THEN.

GAYA

IT WAS TWO YEARS EARLIER, AROUND THIS TIME OF YEAR.

GAYA

...IS AN EYE-CATCHINGLY ATTRACTIVE GIRL.

... THIS GIRL SASAKI, WHO PROCLAIMED HERSELF TO BE YOUR GOOD FRIEND...

SHE HAD A CERTAIN MASCULINITY TO HER SPEECH THAT SHE ONLY EVER USED WHEN SHE WAS TALKING TO BOYS.

WHEN SHE WAS WITH OTHER GIRLS, SHE TALKED LIKE THEY DID.

IN MY LAST YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL, MY MOM MADE ME GO TO CRAM SCHOOL.

SASAKI WAS IN THE SAME CLASS.

AND SHE ALSO WENT TO THE SAME MIDDLE SCHOOL, SO WE NATURALLY STARTED TALKING.

MAYBE I WAS OVER-THINKING IT.

MAYBE IT WAS A SIGNAL NOT TO VIEW HER AS A ROMANTIC OBJECT.

MAYBE SHE DIDN'T WANT TO BE SEEN BY BOYS AS "JUST" A GIRL.

THUS, "KYON"?

WHAT KANJI DO YOU USE FOR YOUR ACTUAL NAME?

I RELUCTANTLY EXPLAINED THE EPISODE BEHIND IT, AND MY YOUNGER SISTER'S ANTICS.

KYON IS A RATHER UNIQUE NICKNAME.

HOW'D YOU GET IT?

SHE'D GUESSED THE RIGHT CHARACTERS.

I WAS SURPRISED.

SARA (SKRIT)

SARA

SARA

IS THIS IT?

WAIT, DON'T TELL ME.

NI (GRIND)

NICE!

I REPEATED THE REASON MY DAD HAD GIVEN ME WHEN I'D ASKED HIM THE SAME QUESTION.

CAN I ASK HOW YOU GOT IT?

THERE'S GOT TO BE A REASON FOR SUCH A GRAND, MAJESTIC NAME.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE NOT A HUGE FAN OF YOUR NICKNAME.

GOTTA SAY, THOUGH, I LIKE "KYON" BETTER.

STILL, "POINT TWO SECONDS"?

THAT'S BECAUSE THE ONLY TIME PEOPLE CALLED ME BY MY REAL NAME WAS WHEN IT WAS SERIOUS.

ABOUT POINT TWO SECONDS QUICKER.

GATAN (CLUNK)

BECAUSE YOU RESPOND MORE QUICKLY WHEN CALLED BY YOUR REAL NAME THAN BY YOUR NICKNAME.

WHICH MADE ME WONDER IF YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT, DEEP DOWN.

WHEN SOMEONE CALLS YOU "KYON," YOU'RE ABOUT THAT MUCH SLOWER.

THAT'S ABOUT HOW LONG IT TAKES YOU TO ACT ON INFORMATION YOU'VE PROCESSED.

THE BLOOD BANDITS STOPPED BOTHERING ME BUT I STUDIED SERIOUSLY.

SOON MY GRADES STARTED IMPROVING...

IT WAS A HARD BLOW

EVERY WEEK I WOULD GET TO TAKE SHIN-CHAN AND TAKUMA-KUN WITH SASAKI.

THINGS BACK IN PRETTY SURE I'D NEVER BEEN BLOOD-SUCKED BY ANYONE

ALTHOUGH SHE WAS ALWAYS [illegible] DON'T IMPROVE YOUR GRADES MORE, YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO GO TO THE SAME COLLEGE AS SASAKI."

...WHICH CERTAINLY PROVIDED [illegible]

SHE'D HAVE HER HAND AT ME

AND I'D MAKE FOR HOME

BYE, KYON.

SEE YOU AT SCHOOL TOMOR-ROW.

IT'S LIKE A PAGE OUT OF AN INNOCENT MIDDLE SCHOOL LOVE STORY.

WAI

(CHATTER)

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE YOU'D ALREADY PROGRESSED SO FAR.

A CERTAIN SOMEONE IS LIKELY TO GET THE WRONG IDEA.

OH, CER-TAINLY.

BUT I WONDER WHAT THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU THOUGHT.

WAI

WAI

DON'T SAY THAT.

WE DIDN'T HAVE THAT KIND OF BOY-GIRL RELATION-SHIP AT ALL.

NOW THAT HE MENTIONED IT, KUNIKIDA AND NAKAGAWA HAD BOTH MISUNDER-STOOD US...

I HAD A VERY BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

DOKA (WHUMP)

IS THIS HER SUB-CONSCIOUS, AGAIN?

...THEN GOT ALL FUZZY-HEADED?

GI (CREAK)

...HARUHI SAW SASAKI, HEARD HER REFER TO HERSELF AS MY CLOSE FRIEND...

YOU DON'T THINK ...

...RECENTLY THEIR BEHAVIOR HAS CHANGED SLIGHTLY.

REGARDING CLOSED SPACE AND THE CELESTIALS ...

ONLY OCCASION-ALLY DO THEY BOTHER STRIKING A BUILDING, AS THOUGH SUDDENLY REMEMBER-ING WHAT THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO DO.

THOUGH THEY STILL APPEAR, WHERE THEY WOULD USUALLY BE ACTIVELY DESTRUC-TIVE...

...THEY'RE NOW LISTLESS, AT LOOSE ENDS.

CLOSED SPACE STILL APPEARS THE SAME.

BUT THE CELESTIALS ARE SO PLACID IT'S EERIE.

WE MUST DESTROY THE CELESTIALS TO ELIMINATE CLOSED SPACE.

IT'S THE SAME THING.

SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM ACTING RATIONALLY?

HER SUBCONSCIOUS IS WANDERING, LOST.

OR EVEN WHAT SHE SHOULD BE THINKING.

...SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT SHE'S THINKING.

IT'S AS THOUGH ...

WAI (CHATTER)

WAI

...THAT SUZUMIYA-SAN'S SUBCONSCIOUS IS AT A LOSS.

WE MUST CONCLUDE ...

FOR MY PART, IT SEEMS OBVIOUS TO ASSUME THAT SUZUMIYA-SAN IS FEELING SOME JEALOUSY TOWARD SASAKI.

GAYA

GAYA (CHATTER)

GAYA

DO YOU SEE?

NOT EVEN RE-MOTE-LY.

?

DO YOU THINK SUZUMIYA-SAN IS SOMEONE WHO KNOWS A LOT ABOUT ROMANCE?

SO, THEN.

GAYA

GAYA (CHATTER)

THAT'S ABSURD.

SHE'S THE KIND OF GIRL WHO THINKS OF ROMANCE AS A MENTAL ILLNESS, YOU KNOW.

IN ANY CASE, SHE IS NOT PARTICULARLY MATURE.

GAYA

OR VICE VERSA.

SHE MAY SEEM TO UNDER-STAND, BUT SHE DOES NOT.

NOR DO I.

GAYA

HEH HEH..

YOU THINK SO?

...FOR YOU TO SEE THROUGH ME SO EASILY.

I MUST NOT BE MAKING ENOUGH EFFORT, THEN...

YOU'RE ONE TO TALK.

YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF CONTRA-RIANISM IN YOU.

FROM THAT PER-SPECTIVE AT LEAST, SHE IS A NORMAL GIRL.

SHE JUST ASSUMES RATHER CONTRARY POSITIONS AT TIMES.

LET'S CALL IT "SURPRISE."

WAI

IT'S NOT QUITE "JEALOUSY." IT'S MORE BASIC THAN THAT.

...ONE SHE NEVER KNEW ABOUT— HAS STIRRED UP FEELINGS WITHIN SUZUMIYA-SAN THAT SHE CAN'T EXPLAIN.

WAI (CHATTER)

WAI

TO ANALYZE THINGS ...

...I'D SAY THAT DISCOVERING YOUR OLD FRIEND...

WHAT SURPRISED HER WAS THE "CLOSE FRIEND" PART.

WAI

OF COURSE, AND SHE KNOWS THAT.

C'MON, OF COURSE I'M GOING TO HAVE A COUPLE OF OLD FRIENDS.

SO HEARING THE WORDS "CLOSE FRIEND" MAY HAVE CAUSED HER TO FEEL A CERTAIN PANG.

WHAT I THINK ...

...IS THAT DURING MIDDLE SCHOOL, SUZUMIYA-SAN WAS MOSTLY ISOLATED, OR PERHAPS EVEN LONELY.

I DON'T ...

I REALLY DON'T UNDERSTAND.

FOR EXAMPLE, SUPPOSE I HAD A FRIEND OF THE OPPOSITE SEX...

...AND SHE SUDDENLY APPEARED.

WA

WA

AND YET STILL.

WAI (CHATTER)

WAI

SHE'S SO ALOOF.

BUT THAT'S WHAT SHE WANTED.

LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT ME.

HEH HEH!

PERHAPS THAT WAS A BAD EXAMPLE.

WHAT, DO YOU?

BUT THAT'LL NEVER HAPPEN.

THAT'D BUG ME.

HOW'D HE GET BY ME, ANYWAY?

WHAT IF ASAHINA-SAN HAD A MALE FRIEND FROM HER PAST...

...WHO WAS ACTING OVERLY FAMILIAR TOWARD HER?

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?

IT'S A HYPO-THETICAL QUES-TION.

ASAHINA-SAN DIDN'T COME HERE TO PLAY AROUND.

NEITHER DID NAGATO.

WAI

THUS, ERASING THESE FEELINGS FROM YOUR SUB-CONSCIOUS IS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION.

...SO BEING SUSPI-CIOUS OF HER WOULD BE RIDIC-ULOUS.

ASAHINA-SAN HAS NEVER APPEARED PARTIC-ULARLY AWARE OF SUCH THINGS ...

NEITHER JEALOUSY NOR UNEASE, DIFFICULT TO PUT INTO WORDS.

I'LL BET YOU'D FEEL A STRANGE EMOTION.

GAYA

THUS, HER UNCONSCIOUS FRUSTRATION GIVES RISE TO CLOSED SPACE AND THESE SLUGGISH CELESTIALS.

ELEMENTS OUTSIDE OUR ORDINARY CONSCIOUS-NESS ARE NOT SO EASILY CHANGED.

NOW CONSIDER THIS SITUATION, BUT REPLACE ASAHINA-SAN WITH YOU, AND YOU WITH SUZUMIYA-SAN.

WAI

TA (TMP)
TA
TA
TA
...SUCH MEANS MAY YET EXIST.
AL-THOUGH ...
AND THERE IS NO OBVIOUS MEANS TO COUNTER IT.
WHILE THE ROOT CAUSE MAY SEEM CLEAR, IT IS NOT SO.
WE INVITED PEOPLE TO COME FOR ASAHINA'S ALL-YOU-CAN-DRINK TEA, BUT...
WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY LUCK AT ALL.
KYON! KOIZUMI-KUN!
DID ANYBODY INTERESTING SHOW UP?
BAAN (WHAM)
I GUESS THIS YEAR'S JUST A BAD CROP.
BUU (BOO)
THE GUYS WHO STARTED LEERING AT US WERE OBVIOUSLY DIS-QUALIFIED.
AND ALL THE GIRLS RAN AWAY.

WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED!

BUT I'M SURE THERE'S AT LEAST ONE SUITABLE PERSON SOME-WHERE.

HARUHI'S FACE...

IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, DID YOU KNOW ANY INTERESTING STUDENTS YOUNGER THAN YOU?

KURU (TWIRL)

THERE DEFINITELY WEREN'T ANY IN MY SCHOOL, SO ANYBODY FROM EAST CENTRAL IS OUT.

ZA (STEP)

HER FACE WAS SHINING WITH A BRILLIANCE LIKE THE NUCLEAR FUSION OF A TRIPLE-STAR SYSTEM.

GOTO (THUNK)

NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT, HUH...

GI (CREAK)

THERE JUST WEREN'T ANY FRESHMEN WITH A SPARK.

MAYBE WE'VE GOTTA EXPAND OUR SEARCH AREA.

OH YEAH?

I SORT OF THINK THE PROBLEM IS SOME-WHERE ELSE.

LIKE THOSE CLOTHES. MAYBE.

THEY'RE NOT GOING TO COME TO US IF WE JUST WAIT.

IT'S ALWAYS BETTER TO CAST YOUR NET WIDER, AND IN A BIGGER SEA.

WHAT KIND OF NEW STUDENT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

FUU (SIGH)

I WAS CARE-LESS.

LAST YEAR WE SHOULD'VE GONE TO ALL THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT AND RECRUITED EARLY.

...AND POLITER THAN KOIZUMI!

...BETTER-BEHAVED THAN YUKI...

SOMEONE CUTER THAN MIKURU...

HMM, WELL...

GATAN (CLATTER)

UH-UH!

THE SOS BRIGADE ADMITS ONLY A SELECT FEW!

WE HAVE NO NEED FOR CHARAC-TERS SIMILAR TO ONES WE ALREADY HAVE!

GEEZ

THAT'S A TALL ORDER.

ARE YOU TRYING TO FIELD A FOOTBALL TEAM?

WHY DO YOU CARE WHETHER WE GET MORE MEMBERS?

MAYBE WE SHOULD START A SATELLITE BRIGADE IN ANOTHER SCHOOL.

OR ESTABLISH A PREP BRIGADE IN A MIDDLE SCHOOL ...

WE'VE GOT TO ADVANCE ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE GLOBALIZING WORLD!

BAAAAN (BOOOOM)

WORLD

OUR GOAL IS THE GLOBE!

MY SOS BRIGADE HAS TO GO WORLDWIDE!

WE'RE NOT DOING THIS AS A COMMERCIAL VENTURE!

BISHI (WHIP)

HA-HA, THAT'S STUPID.

JUST START YOUR OWN PRIVATE SCHOOL AND MAKE YOURSELF THE PRINCIPAL.

WITH COMPULSORY BRIGADE MEMBERSHIP.

THAT'S HORRIFYING.

RATHER THAN WANTING MORE MEMBERS, IT SEEMED LIKE SHE WAS HOPING SOMEONE WOULD COME ALONG WITH A MYSTERY TO SOLVE.

SHA (WHISK)

THIS YEAR SHE SEEMED TO BE TAKING A MORE UNDERGROUND RESISTANCE-STYLE APPROACH.

NNN (HNNN)

MY GUESS WAS THIS:

THE SOS BRIGADE COULDN'T GET ANY BIGGER.

HYUUUUU (WHOOSH)

NOW I HAD NO USE FOR THEM.

THOSE WERE TALES I'D ONCE WANTED TO HEAR MYSELF.

BUT AT THAT TIME, I HAD NO IDEA.

AS IT WOULD TURN OUT, MY PREMONITION WAS HALF-RIGHT AND HALF-WRONG.

HYUU (FWOO)

ヒュウ

NOBODY COULD'VE GUESSED WHAT WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

NOT KOIZUMI, NOT NAGATO, NOT EVEN ASAHINA THE ELDER.

uuuuu

BUT HARUHI SUZUMIYA.

WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?

THE RESPONSIBLE PARTY WAS CLEAR.

THE DISSOCIATION OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA II : END

TO BE CONTINUED

AND ONE OTHER...

IS SHE A GHOST?
OR SOMETHING LIKE ONE.

SHE'S NOT HUMAN!!

ON THE BRIGADE CHIEF'S ORDER, THE FIRST CITY PATROL OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS!

MIKURU'S KIDNAPPER!?

KYON IS FIRST TO ARRIVE AT THE MEETING POINT, BUT HE HAS ANOTHER CHANCE ENCOUNTER...

AND BESIDE HER, NONE OTHER THAN...

MYSTERIOUS INDIVIDUALS APPEARING ONE AFTER THE OTHER...

THE ACTION CONTINUES IN VOLUME 17, THE DISSOCIATION ARC!

The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya

16

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